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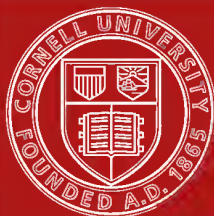
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J. Hooker  
Maj. Genl.







# THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE.

BY  
SAMUEL P. BATES.

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*When Sylla, after all his victories, styled himself a happy rather than a great general, he discovered his profound knowledge of the military art. Experience taught him that the speed of one legion, the inactivity of another—the obstinacy, the ignorance, or the treachery of a subordinate officer, was sufficient to mar the best concerted plan; that the intervention of a shower of rain, an unexpected ditch, or any apparently trivial accident, might determine the fate of a whole army. It taught him that the vicissitudes of war are so many, disappointment will attend the wisest combinations; that a ruinous defeat, the work of chance, sometimes closes the career of the boldest and most sagacious of generals; and that to judge of a commander by the event alone, is equally unjust and unphilosophical, a refuge of vanity and ignorance.—NAPIER.*

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MEADVILLE, PA.:  
EDWARD T. BATES,

1882.

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## PREFACE.

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DE PEYSTER, in his "Critical Review of the Battle of Chancellorsville," says, "Of all the battles of the rebellion, the writer has found Chancellorsville the most difficult to comprehend in all its turns and phases. Even yet, some of its movements continue to be enigmas to him." And so able a soldier and keen a strategist as General Humphreys, who was himself a prominent actor on the field, says, in his testimony, "Probably I know less in regard to the battle of Chancellorsville than any other battle I ever took part in." It should be added that there has been doubtless more misapprehension, and, in consequence, downright misleading of the public mind respecting this battle than any in the long catalogue of the four years of the late war.

As a military study, no battle presents so many broad questions, that require, for their correct solution, the best talent of the student, and the most profitable employment of his faculties. Many of the great principles of the military science—tactics, strategy, and logistics—are exemplified in a remarkable manner, in this campaign.

To understand well a campaign it is necessary to know at every moment of time where the two opposing armies are. They must be known and watched, as the dispatcher, on a line of railway where innumerable trains are moving, follows his trains. Unless one can answer for the position of all the troops, who are parties to the contest at every conceivable epoch in its progress, he is constantly liable to be imposed upon by false testimony and false opinions, and to be perpetually led astray in his own judgments. But with this knowledge in mind, he is prepared to detect error, and misrepresentation, and easily trace the real phases of the fight. The erroneous testimony given respecting this battle, which has formed the basis and framework of the accounts of it that have, from time to time, been published, was the result of not knowing where the rebel army was, at the times which the testimony touched, and not of any intentional deceit.

The writer has attempted to give what he conceives to be a truthful outline and coloring to his narrative. If he has failed in any respect to compass this result, none will

feel more sorrow than he, and none will be more ready than he to repair a wrong. Trusting that he has, in some good degree, made plain an extremely intricate subject, he submits it to the public.

S. P. B.

FOUNTAIN SIDE, MEADVILLE,

*June 9th, 1882.*







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## PORTRAITS.

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JOSEPH HOOKER, . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece.</i>
THOMAS JONATHAN (STONEWALL) JACKSON, . . . . .	<i>to face page 110</i>

# HISTORY

## OF THE

# BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### PRELIMINARIES TO THE CAMPAIGN.



ON the right bank of the Potomac, a few miles above its confluence with the Rappahannock, stretching along the shore for a considerable distance, is the estate of Mount Vernon, once the home of Washington, and where repose his mortal remains. In his lifetime, all this section of country, diversified by hill and dale, skirtings of forest and far-stretching meads, was familiar ground. At Fredericksburg, a few miles away, he attended church on the Sabbath, whither he often rode on horseback, where Mary, his mother, lived, and where she lies buried. In moving up and down the river, which is here a lordly stream, the mansion and the tomb of the chief are plainly visible, and in passing, it is the invariable custom to dip the ensign of the craft, and strike the bell in measured note, the pilgrim standing with uncovered head. It is a mark of veneration bred of those exalted qualities displayed in cabinet and field, for the founding and unification of a country, of which he is aptly termed its Father. As his eye rested in his later days upon the repose and quiet of this beautiful landscape, the river rolling at his feet, orchards and green meadows sweeping up on every side, the blue hills of Virginia in the back-ground; and he

contemplated, with just satisfaction, his life-work successfully accomplished, is it possible that a shade of sadness was ever brought to that serene brow, by visions of a broken and disrupted country, the fragments warring over these fields to destroy what he gave his life to build up and cement?

The perpetual murmur which falls upon his ear, as he rests in his tomb by the stream gliding onward to the sea, was often broken during the years of fratricidal conflict, by the crash of arms, as venomous strife appealed to the red hand of battle. By a singular fatality, the line which bounds the horizon of Mount Vernon encircles fields on which were some of the most desperate and deadly conflicts of the war.

The Potomac river, which forms the northern boundary of Virginia, was the limit of the seceding States, east of the Appalachian range of mountains, and was the line which the Confederate armies sought, in the early stages of the war, to defend. The next stream south, of sufficient size to be capable of being made a line of defense, is the Rappahannock. When, therefore, their armies were pushed back from the former stream, they entrenched themselves upon this, and here, consequently, was the ground where grand campaigns had their initial, and where the finest armies, on both sides of the contest, struggled for the mastery.

Shortly after the close of the summer campaigns of 1862, which had raged upon the Peninsula, at Bull Run before Washington, and at South Mountain and Antietam in Maryland, McClellan, Pope, and McDowell, who had been holding command of the Army of the Potomac, either in whole or in part, were superseded by Major-General Ambrose E. Burnside. It was on the 8th of November that he assumed command of the consolidated Potomac army. In the first battle of Bull Run he had proved himself a brave and skillful officer, and in a subsequent campaign, undertaken by sea, into North Carolina, upon a dangerous and tempestuous coast, he had displayed remarkable enterprise, and the disposition to press forward unceasingly—qualities which the government and the country, on account of the ill success and seeming dilatoriness of former commanders, were eager to see displayed.

The autumnal rains had already set in, and, under ordinary con-

ditions, the time of campaigning would have been considered past, and preparations made to go into winter-quarters, to await, during the inclement season, the settled weather of the spring. But he well knew the impatience which was oppressing every heart, and being constituted of that stern stuff, which never cowers before obstacles and hardships, he had no sooner assumed command than he opened an active campaign. Feigning a movement towards Gordonsville,\* he made a real march towards Fredericksburg, where he hoped to cross the Rappahannock, and occupy the heights beyond before the opposing army should divine his motive. But General Robert E. Lee, who was pitted against him in command of the Army of Northern Virginia, was possessed of enterprise akin to his own, and had placed himself in position to oppose the passage at that point, long before Burnside was ready to cross, the latter having been unaccountably delayed by the failure of the proper officers to bring up the bridge-train.

It was the 13th of December, 1862, before his preparations were completed for offering battle. The passage of the stream was resolutely effected, and the necessary bridges having been laid, the grand army moved over. But, at a distance of a mile to two miles back from the river, on a line of rugged, wooded bluffs, lay the opposing legions in impregnable fastnesses, awaiting the advance. It was boldly made. But, though wave after wave of living valor dashed madly against those rocky heights, guarded in front by walls of stone, little impression was produced, and when all hope of success by direct advance was gone, on the night of the 15th, Burnside withdrew his entire army without molestation.

Inspired with a resolution which knew no impediment nor delay, and stung with mortification at his previous misfortune, he was scarcely settled in his camp before he commenced preparations for another attempt. His infantry was to cross some six or seven miles below Fredericksburg,† at a point opposite the Sedden house, near Hayfield, while a demonstration was being made above the town; and, in case he was discovered and prevented from crossing below, then the demonstration above was to be converted into a real progress.

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\* "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 643-650.

† "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 717.

A cavalry force, consisting of 2,500 men, the best in the service, he divided into two columns, and while one made demonstrations upon the upper Rappahannock, the other, consisting of a thousand picked men, with four pieces of artillery, was to cross the Rappahannock at Kelly's ford, and the Rapidan at Raccoon ford, and, sweeping around, fall upon Lee's communications, blow up the locks on the James river canal, destroy the iron bridge on the Richmond and Lynchburg railroad at the place of crossing, and the bridge over the Nottaway, on the Richmond and Weldon railroad. When this was well accomplished, Burnside, with the main body, was to cross the river, as indicated, and complete the severance of Lee's main line of supply, or defeat him in battle. The cavalry expedition was well on the way, and all the dispositions had been made for crossing, positions for the artillery to cover the movement having been selected, and logs cut for corduroying the roads, when, on the 30th of December, General Burnside received the following telegram from President Lincoln: "I have good reason for saying that you must not make a general movement without letting me know of it." A messenger was immediately dispatched to arrest the cavalry, and all movements were at once suspended.

So numerous were the sympathizers with the seceding States, in and about the army, and in all the departments of the government, that it was impossible for a plan of campaigns to be divulged beyond the breast of him who formed it, without being immediately communicated to the enemy. So disastrous was this evil found to be that the General-in-Chief of the Army, Henry W. Halleck, had directed General Burnside not to telegraph any of his plans to Washington.\* What the objection to a movement was, Burnside was at a loss to conceive, as the President had always manifested impatience

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*\* Question.* Did the President know at the time he sent you the telegraphic dispatch suspending your movement, what movement you contemplated?

*Answer.* No, sir; nothing except that I had ordered a movement. I take it, he knew that. General Halleck knew it. None of them knew my plans. In fact, General Halleck telegraphed me distinctly and positively to send nothing at all over the wires in regard to my plans.

*Question.* Did those who communicated with the President know your plans?

*Answer.* No, sir; not a General in my command knew my plans. They knew they were to cross, that was all.—Testimony of GENERAL BURNSIDE, "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 722.

at delay. On visiting Mr. Lincoln, he learned that two of his general officers, when they found that a movement was about to be undertaken, had been to Washington, and, in a roundabout way,\* had told the President, with whom they sought an interview, that there was dissatisfaction in the army, and that their belief was that another movement across the river would end disastrously, that the men would not fight † with that enthusiasm necessary to success.

Before leaving, General Burnside desired to have an order from the President or General Halleck, explicitly directing a forward movement. This General Halleck refused to give, but gave some general principles which should govern in the management of campaigns, ‡ and took care to assert that he had always favored a forward movement. The President indorsed this paper, and, understanding from its purport that a movement was desired by the government without explicitly directing it, General Burnside de-

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\* "I also found myself in a very delicate position in this conversation. I did not wish to tell the President, and I did not tell him at any one time, that the troops had no confidence in General Burnside. I could not tell him that, although, so far as I was concerned, that was my firm belief. But that was a most delicate thing for me to say, and therefore I had to go, as it were, around it indirectly. . . . If I could have gone to the President and said to him, 'Mr. President, the army has no confidence in General Burnside, that is the whole trouble down there,' my conversation would not have lasted five minutes; but that was manifestly improper. I could not say it, although I did believe it firmly."

. . . . "Question. Do I understand you to say that this lack of confidence in the army arose from a want of confidence in General Burnside's military ability?"

"Answer. That is my firm belief.

"Question. And do I understand you to say that that opinion was pretty universal in the army?"

"Answer. That is the misfortune—that it was almost universal. That was my firm belief from all I could hear.

"Question. Did you communicate that fact to the President in any manner?"

"Answer. As I have already remarked, I thought it would be highly improper for me to come square out and say that. I say, as I have before stated, that I tried to convey to the President, indirectly, this idea—that the troops had no confidence in General Burnside."—Testimony of GENERAL JOHN NEWTON, "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 731-2-7.

† My meaning was this, that they would fight to a certain extent, but they would not fight with that rush and impetuosity which the situation of affairs on the Rappahannock absolutely demanded as the first element of success.—Testimony of GENERAL JOHN NEWTON, "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 733.

‡ Testimony of GENERAL BURNSIDE, "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 719.

terminated to again put his army in motion. On returning to camp, however, he found that all the details of the cavalry movement which he had formed were known to the enemy,\* as well as his entire plan of campaign. This determined him to give up entirely the campaign in this particular form, and to cast about for other dispositions.

On examining the ground above Falmouth, he believed that a crossing could be effected at Banks' and United States fords. He, accordingly, made all the necessary surveys and preparations as before, only reversing his tactics, and making the feint to cross a few miles below. On the 20th of January the command had been given to move, and the camps were astir, when there came on one of those wintry rains so common to the Virginia climate. It seemed as if the windows of heaven had been opened, and were pouring out all their torrents. The earth soon became like a saturated sponge, and the roads impassable, a full team scarcely sufficing to draw an empty wagon. Teams were doubled and quadrupled to move the heavy guns which soon sank in the yielding mud, blocking the way, and creating inextricable confusion. Single horsemen were unable to advance, and were obliged to dismount. The delay thus occasioned robbed the movement of whatever of secrecy and surprise had been intended, and enabled the ever watchful enemy to divine its purpose and prepare to meet it.

Satisfied that all attempts to assail the enemy in this direction would be fatal, he reluctantly on the 22d of January, for the third time, ordered his army to return to camp. But the return proved even more difficult than the advance, and in the midst of the sorest labors to extricate the artillery and trains, the hostile soldiers, who stood guard on the opposite side of the river, commiserating their opponents in these troubles, in mockery offered to come over and lend a helping hand. Thus ended what in common parlance was known as, the "Mud March."

In the meantime it had come to the knowledge of General Burnside who the officers were that had made the gratuitous representations to Mr. Lincoln, and what ones in the army shared in their views. He had learned, moreover, that these soldiers believed it

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\*"Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 718.



impracticable\* to cross the river in the face of an active foe. General Burnside distinctly saw that he could never prosecute successful campaigns, with a portion of his officers so little in sympathy with his plans and purposes, and accordingly went to his tent and drew up, what is known as, order No. 8 of his series, dismissing certain officers from service, and relieving others from duty with the Army of the Potomac. This he ordered his Adjutant-General to issue; † but was prevailed upon, by a cool-headed adviser, to first lay it before the President, whose approval it required to give it validity. He accordingly went to Washington, and placed in the hands of Mr. Lincoln this order, together with his own resignation as a Major-General, with the explanation, that if the President would approve the order and see it executed, he would withdraw the resignation; otherwise its acceptance was desired.

After due consultation with his military advisers, the President decided to relieve General Burnside but not to accept his resignation, deeming him to be an energetic and faithful officer. Impressed with the lofty sense of duty and responsibility of each individual to serve his country entertained by the President, the General generously offered to waive every motive of pride or ambition, and to return to the command of his old corps, or any other service required of him.‡ But who should succeed to this fearfully responsible position—the command of the Army of the

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\*It was my belief, my military belief, that with the best troops in the world we would have failed at that time. . . . It is laid down by the very best military writers—not merely theoretical, but practical military writers—that the passage of a river in face of an opposing force never succeeds, except by mere chance; that the instances of success are so rare that the rule is proved by the exceptions; that it is impossible to pass a river except what is called by surprise; that is, at a point so far removed from the main body of the enemy, or do it so suddenly that you have time to get your troops over, and not only get them over but also in order of battle so as to be ready to meet an attack; for, if the enemy charge upon you before you get in order of battle, the more troops you have over the worse for you.—Testimony of GENERAL NEWTON, "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 738.

† "Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 720, 721.

‡ General Burnside always distrusted his ability to command the Army of the Potomac, as will be seen from the following testimony: "I told them what my views were with reference to my ability to exercise such a command, which views were those I had always unreservedly expressed—that I was not competent to command such a large army as this. I had said the same over and over again to the President and Secretary of War."—"Conduct of the War," Part I., p. 650.

Potomac, the largest of the national forces, and upon which was the chief reliance of the government for the safety of the Capital and its own integrity. To this time it had had a peculiarly unfortunate history. In its varied encounters at Bull Run, upon the Peninsula, and now before Fredericksburg,

"Unmerciful disaster  
Followed fast and followed faster, till its songs one hurden bore,  
Till the dirges of its hope the melancholy burden bore."

This army was not wanting in able soldiers. But who, in the midst of its countless complications, could harmonize conflicting wills, and successfully wield its hundred thousand men? Who should prove the disenchanter?

"Who should snatch the wand?  
Who, with the rod reversed,  
And backward mutters of dis severing power,"

could break the spell, and so reorganize and inspire that army with confidence in itself and in its leader, as to make it invincible? Who could dissipate the gloom, and bring sunshine and the unclouded sky?

President Lincoln, upon whom the decision finally rested, determined unhesitatingly to confer this grave responsibility upon Major-General Joseph Hooker, who had been with the Army of the Potomac from its origin, and by his heroism in the hour of battle had won the familiar title of "Fighting Joe Hooker." At Williamsburg and at Charles City Cross Roads, in the Peninsula campaign, he had rendered signal service, holding his division with great gallantry at the latter point, when opposed by superior numbers, where, had he yielded, the disaster would have been irreparable. But it was on the field of Antietam that he had given brilliant proof of his exalted qualities as a soldier, having opened the battle and borne the brunt of the heavy fighting, successfully assaulting the enemy in his chosen position and driving him back, leaving that memorable "cornfield,"\* in front of the little church,

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\*Mr. Lincoln visited the Antietam field immediately after the close of the battle, and, when conducted over the ground where General Hooker fought, and the "cornfield" into which the corps of Stonewall Jackson had poured until the bayonets of his men were as the corn-blades for number, and upon which Hooker had opened with his artillery at the opportune moment and cut them down in ranks as they stood, the

literally strewn with the dead and the dying, and never staying in his course until he was himself borne from the field with a painful wound.\*

At the time of the retirement of General McClellan from the command of the Potomac army, General Hooker had been urged as his successor, and the President is understood to have favored it; but General Halleck, who was then General-in-Chief of all the armies, made objection, and General Burnside was chosen. But the President was now decided, and though Halleck still opposed, his voice was impotent. The President himself saw faults in the character of General Hooker, or conceived he did, and took occasion to point them out, freely and unreservedly, in his letter notifying the General of his appointment. As an example of the President's simplicity and frankness, and his exalted sense of justice and of right, it is here cited, and though he was entirely at fault in the opinion he entertained of General Hooker's lack of ready obedience to his superior's orders, it proved the shortest and best way to its rectification, and convinced the object of his reproof that Mr. Lincoln was at heart his best and truest friend.

President had conceived a strong liking for General Hooker, and from that moment appears to have been impressed with the belief that here was the general who ought to be at the head of the army.

[From the original autograph letter of General McClellan to General Hooker.]

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, *Sharpsburg, Sept. 20th, 1862.*

MY DEAR HOOKER:—I have been very sick the last few days and just able to go where my presence was absolutely necessary, so I could not come to see you, and thank you for what you did the other day, and express my intense regret and sympathy for your unfortunate wound. Had you not been wounded when you were, I believe the result of the battle would have been the entire destruction of the Rebel army—for I know, with you at its head, your corps would have kept on until it gained the main road.

As a slight expression of what I think you merit, I have requested that the brigadier-general's commission, rendered vacant by Mansfield's death, may be given to you. I will this evening write a private note to the President on the subject, and am glad to assure you that so far as I can learn it is the universal feeling of the army, that you are the most deserving of it.

With the sincere hope that your health may soon be restored, so that you may again be with us in the field,

I am, my dear General,

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER,  
Commanding corps.

Your sincere friend,  
GEO. B. MCCLELLAN, *Major-General.*

MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER:—I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons. And yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and a skilful soldier, which, of course, I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable, if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm. But I think that during General Burnside's command of the army, you have taken counsel of your ambition, and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country, and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the Army and the Government needed a Dictator. Of course it was not *for* this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those Generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The Government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander, and withholding confidence from him, will now turn upon you. I shall assist you, as far as I can, to put it down. Neither you, nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army, while such a spirit prevails in it.

And now, beware of rashness—Beware of rashness, but with energy, and sleepless vigilance, go forward, and give us victories.

General Hooker immediately repaired to Washington, and in a personal interview disabused the President's mind of the erroneous impression under which he was laboring, and satisfied him that he had given prompt and ready support to every order and requirement of General Burnside, even though his judgment might not have approved of their wisdom.\* General Halleck and Secretary

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\* In the few paragraphs that can be devoted to the operations of the army under General Burnside, we have simply stated the leading facts in the case without attempting to argue the justness of the one view or the other. But the subject cannot be fairly dismissed without a few words of explanation. General Burnside in his order dismissing some of his officers and relieving others, seemed to be laboring under the impression that these officers were purposely trying to thwart his plans. Indeed the opinion prevailed at the North, that these Generals saw in the disaster of Burnside their own advancement, and the tone and temper of Mr. Lincoln's letter would seem to imply that he was tinctured with such an idea. In the battle of Fredericksburg Burnside had made strong front attacks on commanding, impregnable positions, fortified after the best military art. Four separate attacks were made on the right, upon Marye's Heights, by powerful columns, led respectively by French, Hancock, Howard,

Stanton were present at the interview. To the question whether, in addition to the command of the Army of the Potomac, he desired that of the Department of Washington, and of the upper Potomac, as his predecessor had had, he answered in the negative—not much in the spirit of dictatorship—assigning as a reason, that in the then condition of the Army of the Potomac, all his time would be required to bring that army up to the full state of efficiency necessary to win battles. He was aware that General Halleck was inimical to himself, and had opposed his appointment; hence, in this interview, he stated to the President, that he had but one request to make of him, that he would stand between himself and the commanding general of the army.\* That he should have been under the necessity of making such a request, upon his entrance to duty, was by no means a propitious circumstance. On the 31st of January, the Ninth corps, of which General Burnside had resumed command, was withdrawn from the Army of the Potomac, and transferred to the Department of the Ohio.

Regardless of the weather and the wintry season—from early in November to near the close of January—Burnside had kept the army astir, having planned and attempted the execution of three distinct campaigns, involving the employment of the entire army. But General Hooker was convinced of the futility, as well as the

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and Humphreys, which made not the least impression, while each wave as it went forward suffered terrible slaughter. Burnside, not satisfied, wished to persevere in these front attacks and hurl other columns upon the foe. Old soldiers like Sumner and Hooker were frank enough to remonstrate with him against this futile waste of life, and these were two of the names included in order No. 8. A soldier who regards with unclouded eye these assaults cannot fail to see that they were ill-advised and none probably came to regard them with more regret than General Burnside himself.

\* “This was the only request I made of the President on assuming command. As I then stated, I deemed it necessary, for the reason that the commanding general had, to a limited extent, been identified with the Army of the West and seemed to think there was no other army in the Republic. He wrote and spoke freely of the army he had commanded at the expense of one he had never seen. His disparaging comparisons and reflections had been communicated to the army, and neither it nor its commander expected justice at his hands. Besides, I had been reliably informed that he had opposed my appointment to the command of the army against the wishes of the President and a majority of the Cabinet, when the removal of Major-General McClellan from command was in contemplation on two occasions; and that I was again opposed by him on the removal of Major-General Burnside.”—“Conduct of the War,” 1865, Vol. I., p. 111.

inhumanity, of attempting a general movement at this inclement season. He says: "My experience of the previous winter had satisfied me that a winter campaign in that climate, and on that soil, would be unwise, and more likely to be ruinous to ourselves than to the enemy." \*

It was natural for the people of the North to glory in the apparent strength and power of the national army. For, had there ever been seen such a spontaneous and unquestioning uprising before? The question with the government at this stage of the war was not, how can we compel men to enter the ranks, but how can we find a place for them; and with the soldier it was not, how can I escape the dreaded conscription, but what influences can I bring to bear upon my member of Congress, or the governor of my State, to induce the acceptance of myself, my squadron, or my company. It was believed by the people at home that the immense forces sent to the field were the essential requisites to success, and they were perplexed and incapable of comprehending why rebellion was not subdued.

But notwithstanding the fact that countless numbers of recruits had flocked to the field, it must be confessed that when General Hooker came to the command of the army he found it in a deplorable condition. The great disaster at Fredericksburg, and the intense suffering there endured from cold and exposure, with the two subsequent fruitless attempts to renew the conflict, added to the failure of all the previous campaigns, immensely wearing, and destructive of human life, had caused a widespread feeling of gloom and despondency, if not originating among the soldiers themselves, yet among their less courageous friends at home, which, in its reflex influence, was hardly less potent. The proclamation of Emancipation, the notice of which had been given in the previous September, had just been issued; and, however we may attempt to overlook and disguise the fact, removed as we are from the time of its issue, and with all the favoring circumstances attending its success, there can be no doubt that it had, for the time, a depressing influence, and greatly interfered with the efficiency of the army. There was a considerable party in the ranks, and a much larger one at home, who believed, that in putting down rebellion the institution of

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 111.

slavery should not be disturbed, and who fancied they saw, in the inauguration of the emancipation policy, a change in the purpose and object of the war.

"At the time the army was turned over to me," says General Hooker in his testimony,\* taken on the 11th of March, 1865, "desertions were at the rate of about two hundred a day. So anxious were parents, wives, brothers and sisters to relieve their kindred, that they filled the express trains to the army with packages of citizen clothing,† to assist them in escaping from service." A return of the absentees of the army, which the commander at this time caused to be made, showed that 2,922 commissioned officers, and 81,964 non-commissioned officers and privates—a great army in itself—were away from their commands, scattered over the whole country, the majority absent from causes unknown. Desertion was at this time known as French furlough. "I entered upon my duties," says General Hooker, "with many misgivings and apprehensions. When it was announced to me that I had been placed in command of the Army of the Potomac, I doubted, and so expressed myself, if it could be saved to the country."

That this gloomy view is not colored nor exaggerated, we have corroborative testimony from an entirely different source, but of the highest character for integrity and impartiality—from President Lincoln himself—and it is not merely confirmatory of the desperate condition of the army, but of the utter failure of the people at large to understand and appreciate the fact. A little previous to this time a Women's Council, gathered from all sections of the country, had assembled in Washington to confer upon the interests of the Sanitary Commission, and, before separating, had called in a body on the President to get from him some word of encouragement respecting the condition of the country. "I shall never forget," says the annalist,‡ "the shock that his presence gave us at that time. Not more ghastly nor rigid was his dead face as he lay in his coffin, than on that never-to-be-forgotten night. His introverted

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 112.

† "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 192.

‡ Mrs. Mary A. Livermore in the "Ladies' Repository."

look and his half-staggering gait were like those of a man walking in his sleep. He seemed literally bending under the weight of his burdens. To the suggestion that they desired from him some word of encouragement, something to cheer and stimulate, 'I have no word of encouragement to give,' was his sad and blunt reply. 'The military situation is far from bright, and the country knows it as well as I do. The fact is, the people have not yet made up their minds that we are at war with the South. They haven't buckled down to the determination to fight this war through. They've got the idea into their heads that they're going to get out of this fix somehow by strategy. That's the word, strategy! . . . They've no idea that the war is to be carried on, and put through by hard, tough fighting. And no headway is going to be made while this state of mind lasts.'

"Some one ventured a remonstrance against this, and reminded the President how hundreds of thousands had rushed to arms at the call of the country—how bravely the army and navy had fought at Forts Henry and Donelson, Pea Ridge, Shiloh and New Orleans, and how gloriously they had triumphed. He admitted this, but returned to his first statement. 'The people haven't made up their minds that we are at war, I tell you,' he repeated with great positiveness; 'they think there is a royal road to peace. The army has not settled down into the conviction that we are in a terrible war, that has got to be fought out—no, and the officers haven't, either. When you came to Washington, ladies, some two weeks ago, but few soldiers came on with you—that you will all remember. But when you go back you will find every car and every conveyance crowded with them. You won't find a city, town, or a village, where soldiers and officers on furlough are not plenty as blackberries. There are whole regiments that have two-thirds of their men absent—a great many by desertion, and a great many on leave granted by company officers, which is almost as bad. There is a constant call for more troops, and they are sent forward, but the deserters and the furloughed men outnumber the recruits. To fill up the army is like undertaking to shovel fleas; you take up a shovelful'—suiting the word with an indescribably comic gesture—'but before you can dump them anywhere, they're gone. It's like trying to ride a



balky horse; you coax, and cheer, and spur, and lay on the whip, but you don't get ahead an inch; there you stick.'

"'Do you mean that our men desert?' we asked incredulously; for, in our glorifying of the soldiers, we had not conceived of our men becoming deserters.

"'That's just what I mean,' replied the President, 'and the desertion of the army is just now the most serious evil we have to encounter. At the battle of Antietam General McClellan had the names of about 180,000 men on the army rolls. Of them 70,000 were absent on leave granted by company officers, which, as I said before, is almost as bad as desertion; for men ought not to ask for furloughs with the enemy drawn up before them, nor the officers to grant them. About twenty thousand more were in hospital or were detailed to other duties, leaving only some ninety thousand to give battle to the rebels. General McClellan went into the fight with this number, but in two hours after it commenced, 30,000 had straggled or deserted, and so the battle was fought with 60,000, and as the enemy had about the same number, it proved a drawn game. The rebel army had coiled itself up in such a position, that if McClellan had only had the 70,000 absentees, and the 30,000 deserters, he could have surrounded Lee, captured the whole rebel army, and ended the war at a stroke without a battle. We have a straggler's camp out here at Alexandria, in connection with the convalescent camp, and through that camp, in three months, 75,000 deserters and stragglers, who have been arrested, have been returned to their regiments. Don't you see that the country, the army, and the officers also, don't yet believe that we are engaged in one of the greatest wars the world has ever seen, and which can only be ended by hard fighting?'

"'Isn't death the penalty of desertion?' we asked.

"'Yes.'

"'Why not enforce it, then? You would not order many hundreds to be shot before this wholesale depletion of the army would be ended.'

"'Oh, no, no,' replied the President, shaking his head ruefully; 'that can't be done; it would be unmerciful, barbarous!'

"'But isn't it more merciful to stop desertions and fill up the

army, so that when a battle comes off, it may be decisive instead of being a drawn battle, as you say Antietam was?’

“‘It might seem so; but if I should go to shooting men by scores for desertion, I should soon have such a hellabaloo round my ears as I haven’t had yet. You can’t order men to be shot by dozens or twenties. People won’t stand it, and they oughtn’t to stand it. No, we must change the condition of things in some other way. The army must be officered by fighting men.’”



## CHAPTER II.

### PREPARATIONS OF THE TWO ARMIES FOR THE ONSET.



On such a pass had affairs come at the period when General Hooker was assigned to the command of the Potomac army, and such a feeling of despondency was oppressing the President, that the thing which he seemed to desire above all others was for "officers that were fighting men," which had impelled him in his first letter to the General to close it in these impressive words: "With energy and sleepless vigilance, go forward, and give us victories." But could the army be saved? Could the pernicious notions, which had been imbibed from the outset respecting furloughs and absenteeism, be eradicated, and the resistless power of a well-disciplined force be realized?

The first care of General Hooker was to correct the discipline of his troops, and to try his skill in making it a real army. The language of his first order, giving notice of his assuming command of the army, is in a tone of hopefulness and confidence, and breathes the spirit of one who is treading no doubtful nor untried ground. \* "By direction of the President of the United States, the undersigned assumes command of the Army of the Potomac. He enters upon the discharge of his duties with a just appreciation of the responsibilities which they impose. Since the formation of that army he has been identified with its history. He has shared with his comrades in its glories and reverses, with no other desire than that these relations might remain unchanged until its destiny should be accomplished. In the record of our achievements there is much

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\* "Conduct of the War," Vol. I., 1865, p. 183.

to be proud of, and with the blessing of God we will contribute something to the renown of our arms and the success of our cause. To secure these ends, your commander will require the cheerful and zealous co-operation of every officer and soldier. In equipment, intelligence, and valor the enemy is our inferior. Let us never hesitate to give him battle wherever we can find him. The undersigned only gives expression to the feelings of the army when he conveys to its late commander, Major-General Burnside, cordial good wishes for his future."

It is a singular circumstance that the very first order which General Hooker issued, after announcing his staff,\* was one granting furloughs to both officers and men. It provided that one brigade commander, one field officer and two line officers of a regiment, and two enlisted men for every hundred on duty, might be absent at one time for a period not exceeding fifteen days to the more distant States, and ten days to the nearer ones. On receipt of the intelligence that such an order had been issued, President Lincoln was astounded, and instantly telegraphed for General Hooker to come to Washington. One of the crying evils in that army had been absenteeism, and he could not understand why, instead of attempting to bring back the lost, he should begin at once to give to those present liberty to go. The President's first salutation, on the entrance of General Hooker to his presence, was, "You have ruined your army by that order for furloughs. If you let your men loose in that way, from Dan to Beersheba, you will never get them back again." But the General was not frightened. He understood camp-life and the temper of soldiers better than the President, and respectfully, but firmly, urged that the order be allowed to remain in force three weeks, when the result of the first

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\* Maj.-Gen. Daniel Butterfield, Chief of Staff; Brig.-Gen. Seth Williams, Asst. Adjt.-Gen.; Lieut.-Col. Joseph Dickinson, Asst. Adjt.-Gen.; Brig.-Gen. James A. Hardie, Judge Adv.-Gen.; Brig.-Gen. Henry J. Hunt, Chief of Artillery; Brig.-Gen. M. R. Patrick, Prov.-Mar.-Gen.; Col. Rufus Ingalls, Chief Quartermaster; Lieut.-Col. F. Myers, Dep. Chief Quartermaster; Col. H. F. Clark, Chief Commissary; Surgeon Jonathan Latterman, Med. Director; Capt. Samuel T. Cushing, Chief Sig. Off.; Lieut. D. W. Flagler, Chief Ord. Off.; Maj. William H. Lawrence, Aide-de-Camp; Capt. William L. Chandler, Aide-de-Camp; Capt. Alexander Moore, Aide-de-Camp; Capt. Harry Russell, Aide-de-Camp.—*General Order, No. 2, January 29th, 1863.*

furloughs would be known. After urgent appeals the President finally consented.

General Hooker had drawn the order with great skill, and on mature deliberation. He believed that soldiers must be treated as men and not as brutes. The order provided at the outset that a furlough should be granted to those men only who had the most excellent record for attention to all duties. It also required that a register should be kept at the headquarters of each regiment, battery, and detachment, and exact reports made to General Hooker's headquarters weekly, of all furloughs granted, accompanied with remarks respecting the description and probable whereabouts of deserters. If a soldier failed to return at the expiration of his furlough, he was, when found, tried by court-martial, and all furloughs for his company, and if an officer, for his regiment, were stopped. If the inspector found a regiment in remarkably good condition, the furloughs in that command were increased to three for each hundred men, in place of two; and if one was found in a low state of discipline and efficiency, furloughs were stopped altogether. Officers were not allowed to visit Washington, except by permission of the War Department, under pain of dismissal from the service. The express trains were examined, and all citizens' clothing found *in transitu* to the army was burned. That these regulations should be judiciously and scrupulously carried out, staff departments, especially that of the Inspector-General, were thoroughly reorganized, and filled with the best men to be found in the army. Disloyal officers were dismissed from the service. To prevent idleness, the great bane of all armies, vigorous efforts were put forth to keep the troops employed, and whenever the weather would permit, they were engaged in field exercises.

Under the control of these stern regulations, the army rapidly improved in discipline. Each soldier saw, that, in the course of the winter, a way was open to a furlough, but only by strict attention to duty, and the display of the highest soldierly qualities, with exact adherence to its limitations. Indeed a furlough was made a premium for efficiency. President Lincoln never had occasion to annul, nor to modify that order.\*

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\* An officer in command of one of the most efficient regiments in the Potomac army

The cavalry, previous to this time broken up into detachments, had been little more than adjuncts to the headquarters of the infantry commanders, and had never acted as an independent body. It was now reorganized and consolidated as a distinct corps, and in order to stimulate the men by successes, however small, over their adversaries, expeditions were fitted out to attack the enemy's pickets and outposts. "Our artillery," says General Hooker,\* "had always been superior to that of the rebels, as was also our infantry, except in discipline, and that, for reasons not necessary to mention, never did equal Lee's army. With a rank and file vastly inferior to our own, intellectually and physically, that army has, by discipline alone, acquired a character for steadiness and efficiency unsurpassed, in my judgment, in ancient or modern times. We have not been able to rival it, nor has there been any near approximation to it in the other rebel armies. During the time allowed us for preparation, the army made rapid strides in discipline, instruction, and *morale*, and early in April was in a condition to inspire the highest expectations. Its ranks had been filled by the return of absentees. All were actuated by feelings of confidence and devotion to the cause, and I felt that it was a living army, and one well worthy of the Republic."

This feeling of confidence expressed by General Hooker was shared by his corps commanders,† as is evinced by their answers to the question of the committee at their examination, "how did he

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has repeatedly declared to the writer that the effect of General Hooker's discipline was almost immediately perceptible; that an entirely new and improved *morale* was infused into the entire rank and file of the army; that the very atmosphere of the camp seemed to breathe the spirit of the new commander.

\* Testimony before Committee on Conduct of War, 1865, Vol. I., p. 113.

† The system of picket duty was changed. The lines were made perfect; the duty was vigilantly performed; the pickets were constantly inspected, and, finally, desertions were stopped through the means of all these measures of which I have spoken. A better spirit soon manifested itself in the army, and it gradually came up to as fine a condition as I have ever known it to be during my service with it from its organization—I think better than I ever knew it before; great *esprit du corps* obtained throughout the army, and a great feeling of confidence. . . . The intervening time after General Hooker assumed the command was taken up in this improvement of the army. General Hooker devoted himself constantly to personally ascertaining the condition of the army and devising and improving means and remedies for any evils that existed. Great care was given to the commissariat. Commissaries were re-

succeed in elevating the tone and improving the discipline of his army?" One of them is reported to have replied: "He succeeded well; so well that, in my judgment, when he entered upon the Chancellorsville campaign, that army was, for its numbers, more efficient in all respects than it had ever been before. As corps commander I had many opportunities of judging of its condition."\*

In the previous campaigns of the army, especially upon the Peninsula, straggling had proved a serious evil. From the fact that there existed no system for tracing a soldier to his own organization, it was impossible to hold officers to proper responsibility for permitting it. If a man was found away from his command and was asked the division and corps to which he belonged, he would answer to any but the true one. It was General Hooker's crowning merit as a disciplinarian, that he so systematized his government of the army that he held under his own eye the complete operation of every part, even to the minutest circumstance, and if a soldier in a remote detachment had deserted, he knew within a few hours that soldier's height, complexion, and complete description, where he deserted, under what circumstances, and his probable whereabouts. But, for the ready identification of a soldier, when not in his immediate command, there existed no means. To remedy this defect, and to provide an unmistakable method of knowing, at sight, the exact place in the army where every member of it belonged, General Hooker invented the corps badge,† an ingenious device, hitherto unknown in the army, but which soon became an inseparable part of army ensigns, as much so as the flag under which it fought, and is still cherished as one of the fondest mementos of army life. The system was afterwards adopted by other armies in the field, and finally extended to every military organization in the service of the general government.

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quired by general orders to issue to the troops vegetables and fresh bread twice a week. This order was rigidly enforced, and greatly improved the general health of the army. The ratio of sickness decreased from something above ten per cent. to below five *per cent.* It saved the lives of many wounded men subsequently. "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 74.

\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 3.

† The following is a copy of the original order, dated March 21st, 1863:

"For the purpose of ready recognition of corps and divisions of this army, and to

General Hooker gave himself unreservedly to the improvement of his army, and lost no opportunity of increasing its comfort on the one hand, and of opening the way to honorable distinction on the other. He was especially desirous of giving the cavalry an opportunity of measuring swords with the enemy, who, to this time, had claimed decided superiority in this arm of the service. Accordingly, by his directions, General Averell moved with his command, on the 17th of March, 1863, to Kelly's ford, forced a passage of the Rappahannock, making prisoners of a portion of the guard stationed there, and advancing soon came upon the rebel cavalry, led by Stuart and Fitz-Hugh Lee, and well supplied with artillery. Averell at once attacked, and a warm engagement ensued. Charge and counter-charge followed, and the best tactics and manœuvres were employed on both sides to gain an advantage. The artillery was used with effect when an opportunity offered. Until nightfall the battle raged with unabated fury, when, having pushed the rebels back until he came upon a position where they had entrenched upon formidable ground, and the shades of evening settling down, Averell retired and returned to camp, the men greatly elated with their successful encounter with the much-vaunted rebel cavalry. An eyewitness, in describing the battle, says: "It was a square, stand-up cavalry fight, of over four hours' duration, and the result proves that our cavalry, when well handled, is equal, if not superior, to the enemy." This was the first considerable cavalry battle in the Army of the Potomac. That a single, unsupported command should boldly cross the Rappahannock in face of an opposing foe,\* and,

prevent injustice by reports of straggling and misconduct through mistake as to their organizations, the chief quartermaster will furnish, without delay, the following badges, to be worn by the officers and enlisted men of all the regiments of the various corps mentioned. They will be securely fastened upon the centre of the top of the cap. The inspecting officers will at all inspections see that these badges are worn as designated:

1st Corps, a Sphere,	Red for 1st Div., White for 2d Div., and Blue for 3d Div.					
2d " a Trifol, "	"	"	"	"	"	"
3d " a Lozenge, "	"	"	"	"	"	"
5th " a Maltese Cross, "	"	"	"	"	"	"
6th " a Cross, "	"	"	"	"	"	"
11th " a Crescent, "	"	"	"	"	"	"
12th " a Star, "	"	"	"	"	"	"

The sizes and colors will be according to pattern.



resolutely advancing, offer battle on his own ground, and gain a decided advantage, was received as a fortunate omen, and gave new hope to the whole army.

While under the command of General Burnside, the forces in the field had been organized in three grand divisions. Deeming this an impediment to its proper discipline and the character of service it might be called upon to perform, General Hooker, by general order dated February 5th, 1863, directed its discontinuance, and the adoption of the corps organization instead. To the command of the First corps he assigned Major-General John F. Reynolds, with Wadsworth, Robinson and Doubleday commanding respectively its First, Second and Third divisions; to the Second corps, Major-General Darius N. Couch, with Hancock, Gibbon and French commanding divisions; to the Third corps, Brigadier-General Daniel E. Sickles, with Birney, Berry and Whipple commanding divisions; to the Fifth corps, Major-General George G. Meade, with Griffin, Sykes and Humphreys commanding divisions; to the Sixth corps, Major-General John Sedgwick, with Brooks, Howe and Newton commanding divisions; to the Eleventh corps, Major-General Franz Sigel, subsequently Major-General O. O. Howard, with Devens, Steinwehr and Schurz commanding divisions; to the Twelfth corps, Major-General Henry W. Slocum, with Williams and Geary commanding divisions; to the Cavalry corps, Major-General George Stoneman, with Pleasanton, Buford and Averell commanding brigades.

General Lee, in command of the Army of Northern Virginia, was no less active in reorganizing his troops and bringing them to a high state of discipline. He had been placed at the head of that army soon after the battle of Fair Oaks, before Richmond, fought near the close of May, 1862, in which General Joseph E. Johnston, who had held the chief command, was severely wounded. Strenuous efforts were made to gather in, and lay up in convenient depots, the supplies necessary for the regular support of the army. Arms, ordnance and equipments were repaired, or replaced by new. The forges at Richmond were fairly ablaze night and day during the whole winter, and the mechanics were kept constantly employed. The conscription act, which the Confederate government, irrespective

of State boundaries or the rights and powers of State governments, remorselessly enforced, became an efficient instrument for gathering in recruits from every nook and corner of the territory over which it bore sway. The system of filling up their army was far more sensible and efficient than in that of the Union. When the Confederates wanted fresh recruits, and brought in men who knew nothing of military duty, they put them into old and depleted organizations, where each new soldier could stand beside a veteran, and have a veteran officer to drill and discipline him, and where he soon became equal in duty to his comrade, bronzed and begrimed with service. If the Union government wanted recruits, men prominent for political or other reasons were sent out to make stump speeches and enlist their squads. The squad could not be put into an old organization, where it would have experienced officers to lead and drill it, and where its surroundings would inspire confidence, because he who had recruited it must be made a lieutenant, and a more consequential personage must be made a field officer, and hence all was new and untried, while the old regiments were often forced to remain mere skeletons. The consequence was that, while the Union army had a much larger number of regiments than the Confederate, the veteran ones had far less men in them,\* and were weak and inefficient in comparison, while the new regiments, though their ranks were full, were weak, because green and untried.

So effectual was the conscription of rebel soldiers that General Lee found the strength of his army rapidly augmented. General Jackson's corps alone, in three months, increased from twenty-five to thirty-three thousand muskets, equivalent to forty thousand men, and other portions in like proportion.†

General Lee having foiled all attempts by General Burnside to drive him from his position, and having greatly strengthened the natural advantages of his ground by elaborate works—a rapid river rolling between the two armies—understanding the policy of General

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\* Late writers and speakers on the Confederate side have argued, because the Union army had more regiments that it had more men than the Confederate; a futile conclusion. It may have been true, but not for this reason, because by placing the new recruits in old organizations instead of making new ones, their veteran regiments were always larger than the Union.

† Returns for April.

Hooker to be to remain quiet in winter quarters till the opening of the spring, believed that he would be entirely safe in parting with a portion of his veteran troops for an independent campaign.

The rebel government had always regarded the occupation of the Virginia and North Carolina coast, south of the James, by Union armies as a menace to its capital. This river was looked upon as only second in importance to the Confederacy, to that of the Mississippi, and it was undoubtedly in contemplation\* sooner or later to withdraw from the barren wastes of northern Virginia to the line of the James, and recover possession of all the Atlantic coast to the south of it, so as to use Portsmouth and Norfolk as ports for their iron-clads and contraband trade.

General Lee, accordingly, detached a portion of the forces under his immediate command, and, with other forces collected from various quarters, amounting in all to some forty thousand men, sent them, on the 26th of February, 1863, to operate in that direction. A new department was created, known as the Department of Virginia, and Lieutenant-General James Longstreet was put in command, with headquarters at Petersburg, and was supported by such subordinate commanders as D. H. Hill, Pickett, Hood, Garnett, French, Jenkins and Pettigrew, names familiar in the Gettysburg campaign. Posting 15,000 men upon the Blackwater, and a like force between Petersburg and the river, along the line of the railroad, he sent Hill and Pettigrew with a strong force into North Carolina to operate against General Foster, who commanded the Union troops in that State, either to carry the fortified places and capture the garrisons, or failing in that, to make such demonstrations as to cause forces to be detached from his own front and sent thither, and thus increase his chances of success. Foster was present in person when the demonstration was made upon Little Washington, the principal point, and directed the defence, thwarting every effort of the vastly superior force by which the place was invested. Finally, on the 15th of April, despairing of success, and learning that a heavy detachment had been ordered thither to the support of Foster from the column in Virginia, Hill raised the siege, and hastened to join Longstreet.

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\* General John J. Peck's official report, "*Moore's Reb. Rec.*," Vol. XI., p. 121.

Major-General John J. Peck was in command of the forces at Suffolk, the key to the approaches to Portsmouth and Norfolk, under the immediate direction of General Dix, who was at the head of the Department of the James, with headquarters at Fortress Monroe. Peck had in all some fourteen thousand men, and three small gun-boats.

On the 11th of April, in anticipation\* of the speedy arrival of General Hill with his army from North Carolina, General Longstreet having perfected his plans for active operations, ordered his forces to move. Hood advanced on the South Quay road, Pickett on the Sommerton, Jenkins on the Edenton, and a large force on the Providence. Heavy skirmishing ensued with Peck's vanguard. But the overwhelming force of Longstreet's advancing columns drove everything before them, until they came within range of Peck's artillery from within the fortifications, which had been skilfully planned and constructed under his own eye. Here they were swept with terrible effect, and after maintaining the struggle until all hope of carrying the works by assault was lost, Longstreet recalled his decimated ranks, and immediately prepared to lay siege to the place. For twenty-four days the operations were relentlessly pressed, during which nearly ten miles of covered ways, rifle-pits, and field-works were constructed.

The highest hopes had been entertained by the people of the South of the success of this army under Longstreet. The *Petersburg Express*, of the 15th of April, said: "Our people are buoyant and hopeful, as they ought to be. We have in that direction as gallant an army as was ever mustered under any sun, and commanded by an officer who has won laurels in every engagement, from the first Manassas to that at Fredericksburg. Such an army, commanded by such an officer as Longstreet, may be defeated; but such an event is scarcely within the range of possibility." It must be confessed that gallantry and skill were not wanting, and that the siege was prosecuted with a zeal and untiring pertinacity rarely witnessed. But all was to no purpose, and on the night of the 3d of May, after having failed to gain any advantage of moment, Longstreet quietly withdrew, the operations having involved the

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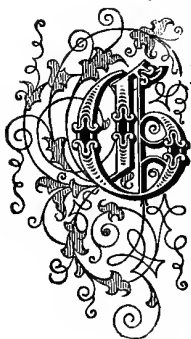
\* "Moore's Reb. Rec.," Vol. XI., p. 126, Docs.

loss of the celebrated Farquier Battery and nearly two thousand men.

During the time that these operations were in progress before Suffolk, General Lee was busily employed in disciplining the forces under his command, and introduced many improvements in the organization of the staff service. His artillery he consolidated in a single body, it having been previously broken up into detachments, and left subject to the control of the other arms of the service. Much labor was also performed on the fortifications along the whole line confronted, or even threatened by the Union army. His forces were organized in two grand divisions, the Second commanded by Lieutenant-General Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson, and the First by Lieutenant-General James Longstreet. Jackson's First division, or what corresponded to the Union corps, was led by Major-General A. P. Hill, with Heth, Pender, Archer, McGowan, Lane and Thomas as his lieutenants; the Second by Major-General D. H. Hill, with Ramseur, Rodes, Doles, Iverson and Colquitt for his lieutenants; the Third, Trimble's, by Brigadier-General R. E. Colston, with Paxton, Jones, Nicholls and Williams as his lieutenants; the Fourth by Major-General Jubal A. Early, with Gordon, Hays, Smith and Hoke for his lieutenants. General Longstreet's First division was commanded by Major-General R. H. Anderson, with Mahone, Posey, Wilcox, Perry and Wright for his lieutenants; the Second by Major-General L. McLaws, with Kershaw, Simms, Wofford and Barksdale as his lieutenants. The two remaining divisions of this corps, under the immediate command of General Longstreet in person, were, as already detailed, operating before Suffolk, south of the James. The cavalry division was under the command of Major-General J. E. B. Stuart, with Fitz-Hugh Lee, Hampton and W. H. F. Lee leading his brigades.

## CHAPTER III.

### PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN.—MOVEMENTS OF THE CAVALRY.



REAT impatience existed in the public mind to have the Army of the Potomac move on an aggressive campaign. The sad fortune which had attended that grand body of men—the result of the spontaneous outburst of loyal sentiment throughout the North—armed and equipped, tutored in the military art, and supported in the field at enormous expense, caused the heart of the nation to throb, with ever-increasing stroke, for its success. The question that was trembling in the breast of the Chief Magistrate, and shared by every earnest wisher for the perpetuity of the Union, was, “Will that army never be triumphant?” “Is the war to be a failure?” “Can this rebellion never be put down?” General Hooker felt this anxiety as keenly as any of his constituents and supporters, but he at the same time realized the intricacy of the problem he was set to solve.

Military critics, familiar with the battle-fields of the old world, and unacquainted with the ground on which General Hooker was compelled to operate, can form no conception of the difficulties he had to encounter. The great plains of Europe, with only an occasional curtain of wood, or gentle declivity, present a most enviable field for the deployment of troops and the marshaling of legions for the grand conflict. Such a field is a perpetual delight to a really great captain. But the prominent characteristic of the topography\* of the entire region from the Potomac to the James, and from the Blue Ridge to the Chesapeake, is a dense forest of

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\* Report of General G. K. Warren, “Conduct of the War,” 1865, Vol. I., p. 51.

oak or pine, with occasional clearings, rarely extensive enough to prevent the riflemen concealed in one border from shooting across to the other; a forest which, with but few exceptions, required the axeman to precede the artillerist the entire distance, from the slashings in front of the fortifications of Washington, to those of Richmond. "A proper understanding of the country," says General Warren, Topographical Engineer-in-Chief of the Army, "will help to relieve Americans from the charge, so frequently made at home and abroad, of want of generalship in handling troops in battle—battles that had to be fought out hand-to-hand in forests where artillery and cavalry could play no part, where the troops could not be seen by those controlling their movements, where the echoes and reverberations of sound from tree to tree were enough to appall the strongest hearts engaged, and yet where the noise would often scarcely be heard beyond the immediate scene of strife. Thus the generals on either side, shut out from sight or from hearing, had to trust to the unyielding bravery of their men, till couriers from different parts of the field brought word which way the conflict was resulting before sending the needed support. We should not wonder that such battles often terminated from the mutual exhaustion of the contending forces, but rather that in all these struggles of Americans against Americans, no panic on either side gave victory to the other, like that which the French, under Moreau, gained over the Austrians in the Black Forest."

Such was the country in which General Hooker was required to make war; but its tangled wilds and impenetrable thickets were not his first or chief difficulties. His own army was encamped along the left bank of the Rappahannock river, having the Aquia railroad and the Potomac river as a base of supply. On the opposite side, along a line of bluffs, varying from a half mile to two miles back from the stream, hugging elaborate fortifications, was a powerful and vigilant foe. Between the two armies rolled a deep and difficult stream.

General Newton, regarded in the army as a military expert, had distinctly declared, in his testimony already cited, that to cross a stream presenting such difficulties as this, in face of an enemy, was regarded by military authorities as impracticable, and only success-

ful by chance. This he states as a general principle. But in addition to the obstacles presented by nature, were elaborate works wrought upon under the direction of the best engineering skill, and diligently prosecuted for a period of six months. At the battle of Fredericksburg, the heights occupied by the enemy had been put in the most complete state of defense. As the two subsequent plans of Burnside were developed to the foe, additional lines of defense to meet the changed ground selected were made, and when the new commander of the Union army came, knowing full well his subtle methods of conducting operations, still further precautions were taken, until the whole line for a distance of twenty-five miles was one complete network of fortifications.

Messrs. Hotchkiss and Allan, Topographical Engineer and Ordnance officers in the Confederate service, in their account of this campaign, say: "During the winter, General Lee extended and strengthened the fortifications in rear of Fredericksburg, and constructed a system of elaborate works along his whole front. This line, reaching from Bank's Ford to Port Royal, extended for more than twenty-five miles. No time, labor, nor skill was spared in its construction, and when completed an almost impregnable barrier was presented to the progress of the Federal army throughout this whole distance. Behind these works the Confederate army was as secure from attack in front as Wellington at Torres Vedras." In addition to these works masked batteries had been placed in commanding positions close in upon the river, where there was a possibility of the Union army attempting to cross. "On the occasion of both these intended crossings of the Federal army," say the authors cited, "dispositions were made to meet the threatened attack. Jackson even concealed, at convenient points near the crossings on his line, artillery which might be brought into immediate use whenever the attempt to cross should be made, but the position of which, in the meantime, could not be suspected."

Hence, "how to get at them" was at the outset a most perplexing question; an enterprise full of hazard. There were several points along the river, below Fredericksburg, where the bluffs, on the Union side, were so close in upon the stream, that artillery planted upon them commanded the opposite bank, which rendered it practi-



cable for troops to cross under cover of their fire; but, when once over, they would be so hemmed in on all sides by fortified heights, bristling with bayonets, that the possibility of advancing was no better than was Burnside's at Fredericksburg. "His troops" (the enemy's), says General Warren,\* "were so disposed as to be readily concentrated on any threatened point. Interspersed along these lines of intrenchments were battery epaulements advantageously located for sweeping the hill-slopes and bottom lands over which our troops would have to march to the assault, and which effectually protected the enemy's artillery from our own. Abatis, formed of fallen timber, and impassable swamps in places, still further strengthened his line and reduced the number of assailable points. . . . In front every little rise of ground that could shelter the enemy and enable him to check our advance was intrenched and prepared for us."

†To reach out beyond the enemy's position towards the Potomac, and turn his right flank, was equally impracticable. To construct roads, necessary for moving the pontoon trains and artillery in that direction, was so difficult, and would require so much time, that the enemy could intrench the opposite heights faster than these roads could be built, and the stream, as it nears the Potomac, perceptibly widens, which would require the use of cumbersome bridge trains.‡ General Lee's spy system was so perfect, that the simplest movement inaugurated was quickly reported to him, and he could readily make his dispositions to checkmate it.

For turning the left flank of the Confederate army the obstacles were even more formidable. As far up as Fredericksburg the Rappahannock is navigable. But, a short distance above the city, the bluffs close in upon the stream, and the sides, for the most part densely wooded, are precipitous and rugged, so that the approach to the stream, or exit on the opposite side, was impossible. The first

\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 52.

† Ibid.

‡ "The difficulty of constructing practicable roads towards King George's Court-House was great. The side streams running into the Rappahannock and those running into the Potomac interlace each other at their sources so as to quite destroy the continuity of the main dividing ridge, and on every road presented transverse ravines with steep hills and oozing springs of water, which our wheels soon mixed with clay and turned literally to streams of mud." Warren's Report, 1865, Vol. I., p. 53.

opening in the heights where the river could be approached was at Banks' ford, six miles above. So important was the defense of this ford considered to be, that General Lee had thoroughly fortified the commanding positions\* on the opposite side, and kept constantly near a strong force for its protection.

The next point, which was capable of being made practicable for crossing, was seven miles farther up the stream, at United States Mine, or Bark Mill ford. But, even here, a vast amount of work would have to be done to prepare the road leading down to the stream for the heavy trains, and while it was being executed the enemy could readily concentrate for its effectual defence, besides "the enemy had already erected long lines of infantry parapets with battery epaulements, and an ample force was encamped near to occupy them." Just above this ford the Rapidan pours its flood into the Rappahannock, and hence to move above their confluence would involve the crossing of two unfordable streams, and to march an army thither, with bridge trains, so far from its base, was regarded as utterly impracticable, without observation in time to prevent it. Indeed so certain were the rebel officers that this could not be effected, that at the very time the campaign opened they were themselves engaged in rebuilding a bridge at Germania ford, over which a portion of our troops actually crossed.†

Some idea may now be formed of the obstacles which General Hooker found in his way in forming his plan of campaign. He well knew that secrecy was absolutely requisite to success in getting his army across the river, and so concentrated as to be in a position to

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\* "His earth parapets, placed so as to sweep with musketry every crossing place and practicable slope, were in three lines from the water's edge to the summit of the slope, and traversed so as to quite protect the defenders from our artillery fire. It might seem that these successive lines would be of little use after the first one was carried, as those who fled from the first would mask the fire of the others, so that pursued and pursuers might enter together. The tactics of the rebels, however, provided for this. The first lines generally surrendered when overpowered instead of running, and thus no confusion was produced in the succeeding lines. At Banks' ford, moreover, two of these lines were so close to each other that both could in places bring their fire upon a party crossing the river, the rising slope permitting the rear line to shoot over that in front. The obstacles here were so great to our forcing a passage that the enemy forebore to place a redoubt on the summit of the hill, thus as it were inviting us to try it."—General Warren's Report, p. 53.

† General Warren's Testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 54.

defend itself. Hence, while he listened to the advice of his associates, he kept his own counsels. General Warren says, \**"Whatever General Hooker's plans were, they were kept perfectly secret from everybody until the movements themselves developed them. I did not know any of his plans until I saw them being carried into operation."*

There were several reasons why General Hooker was eager to move on his campaign as early as the weather and the roads would possibly permit. He had in his army about 40,000 nine months' and two years' men, whose term of service would shortly expire, and if he would have their aid he must move within its limitation. Though opening his campaign earlier than he otherwise would, he was still obliged to give orders to his corps commanders to leave behind, for guard and other duty, troops whose terms were likely to expire before the probable close of the campaign. It was also suspected that the part of Longstreet's corps which, as we have seen, had been operating south of the James, would return to its place in Lee's army, if there was a prospect of a battle. The impatience of the country to see the fruits of his generalship was likewise prompting him.

About the middle of April, 1863, his plans had been matured and his decisions taken. No order promulgated them, but as they stand revealed in the light of their execution, they may be briefly thus stated: His entire cavalry corps, except one brigade, was to move above the junction of the Rapidan with the Rappahannock, cross these streams, routing the enemy's cavalry at various points opposing it, and moving around upon the Aquia and Richmond railroad, General Lee's main avenue of supply, break it up, destroy its bridges, and, by felling timber and destroying bridges on the great highways leading to Richmond, obstruct his progress, should he attempt to fall back. It was believed that if this were thoroughly accomplished, the rebel army would be compelled to retreat from Fredericksburg for lack of supplies, as it was understood that it had very small stores in hand beyond what was needed for daily consumption. When it was judged that this movement was well accomplished, the main body of the army was to cross the Rappa-

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\* General Warren's Testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 43.

hannock a short distance below Fredericksburg, and if any signs of retreat were visible in the rebel army to fall upon it in its famishing condition, and, with unsparing hand, follow up every advantage till that army was either captured or dispersed.

The importance which General Hooker attached to the part assigned to the cavalry to perform, and the stress which he laid upon its complete accomplishment, may be judged from some passages from the instructions issued at starting to General Stoneman, who was to lead the cavalry force. "It is expected that you will be able to push forward to the Aquia and Richmond railroad, somewhere in the vicinity of Saxton's Junction, destroying along your whole route the railroad bridges, trains of cars, depots of provisions, and lines of telegraphic communication. The General directs that you go prepared with all the means necessary to accomplish this work effectually. As the line of the railroad from Aquia to Richmond presents the shortest one for the enemy to retire on, it is more than probable that he will avail himself of it, and the usually travelled highways on each side of it, for this purpose; in which event you will select the strongest positions, such as the banks of streams and commanding heights, in order to check or prevent it, and, if unsuccessful, you will fall upon his flanks, attack his artillery and trains, and harass him until he is exhausted and out of supplies. Moments of delay will be hours and days to the army in pursuit. If the enemy should retire by Culpepper and Gordonsville, you will endeavor to hold your force in his front, and harass him day and night, on the march and in camp unceasingly. If you cannot cut off from his column large slices, the General desires that you will not fail to take small ones. Let your watchword be fight, and let all your orders be fight, fight, fight, bearing in mind that time is as valuable to the General as the rebel carcasses. . . . It devolves upon you, General, to take the initiative in the forward movement of this grand army, and on you and your noble command must depend, in a great measure, the extent and brilliancy of our success. Bear in mind that celerity, audacity and resolution are everything in war, and especially is it the case with the command you have and the enterprise on which you are about to embark."

Ten or twelve miles above the junction of the Rapidan with the Rappahannock is Kelly's ford, which, at this time though pitted and abattised, was feebly defended. Though this route involved the crossing of "two rivers, both mountain torrents, and sensitive to the slightest rains,"\* yet it was the only one open, and this it was determined to take.

In all military operations unforeseen events are liable to greatly modify the best laid schemes. The cavalry moved on the 13th of April, and in two days had brushed away the opposing force, and were passing the stream above Rappahannock station. But on the second day out a violent rain-storm set in from which the river was so swollen that further crossing had to be arrested, and the division already over was obliged to swim their horses in returning. General Hooker immediately ordered the command to encamp in the position in which the storm left it, and await the modification of his plans rendered necessary by this interposition of the elements.

This crossing of a division and then withdrawing it probably had the effect upon the enemy to allay suspicion, for he was doubtless led to regard it in the light of a feint, designed to mask other more important movements. This view is strengthened by the fact that no considerable force was dispatched to guard these avenues for turning the left flank of his army. That the difficulty of eluding the vigilance of the foe at this juncture, and of getting into position where he could hope to fight with any hope of success, was fully realized by General Hooker, is evinced by the following telegram sent on the 21st of April to General Peck, at Suffolk: "Am glad to hear good tidings from you. You must be patient with me. I must play with these devils before I can spring. Remember that my army is at the bottom of a well, and the enemy holds the top."†

It was not until two weeks later, the 27th of April, that the floods had so far subsided as to render it practicable for the cavalry again to move. In the meantime, General Hooker had decided to modify his first plan materially, and instead of making the success of the campaign hinge almost entirely on the operations of the

\*Gen. Hooker's testimony. † "Conduct of the War," telegrams, 1865, Vol. I., p. 218.

cavalry, he had determined, though still relying upon that arm of the service to break up the enemy's communications, to put the main body of his forces where they could strike for the rebel army itself, instead of attempting to force it back upon its line of retreat. He had been undoubtedly led to see, by the interruption which the storm had caused in the movements of Stoneman, that still other contingencies might arise to interfere with the complete accomplishment of all that he had designed for the cavalry to do, and to make provision so that if one part of his plans went amiss, another would still be open for winning a triumph.

His plan for turning the enemy's flank, and putting himself in rear of the rebel army, where its fortifications would all be unavailing, was ingenious. The utmost vigilance was practised by his guards to prevent any one from passing the lines of the army, who could by any possibility carry news of his movements to the foe. All camps in sight of the enemy were suffered to remain unchanged. A column was to be sent down the river a long distance, bearing pontoon trains, to make a noisy demonstration, as if to cross and turn the rebel right. A strong force, consisting of nearly the half of his army, was to proceed below Fredericksburg and actually make a crossing, and stand in readiness, under cover of the guns on the opposite bank, to make a spring upon the rebel entrenchments. While this was transpiring in full view of the enemy, the other wing of his army was to proceed secretly, by hidden ways, to the upper fords of the Rappahannock and the Rapidan, and, having effected a crossing of these streams, uncover the United States mine and Banks' fords, when the balance of his army could readily join him by those avenues, which would then be in his full possession.\*

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\* In these operations General Hooker acted upon the most approved principles of military science. Jomini, in his chapter on the "Passage of Rivers and other Streams," lays down the following as the first rule in conducting such operations: "It is essential to deceive the enemy as to the point of passage, that he may not accumulate an opposing force there. In addition to the strategic demonstrations, false attacks must be made near the real ones, to divide the attention and means of the enemy. For this purpose half of the artillery should be employed to make a great deal of noise at the points where the passage is not to be made, whilst perfect silence should be preserved where the real attempt is to be made."—Jomini's "Art of War," Chap. V., Art. xxxvii., p. 226, Lippincott's Ed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC UNLEASHED.



THE plan of campaign involved ceaseless activity in every part of the great army, and every available force was put early in motion except the few whose encampments were in view of the enemy. General Doubleday, of the First corps, was ordered to proceed with his division, on the 19th of April, down the river to Port Conway, opposite the village of Port Royal, where he made a demonstration of crossing on pontoons which he had taken with him, and at night lighted camp fires enough for half the army, placed some Quaker guns in commanding positions, and, having thoroughly aroused the attention of the enemy, returned to camp.\* On the 21st a force of infantry † demonstrated at Kelly's ford and the Rappahannock bridge. Shortly afterwards a minor detachment was sent to Port Royal, under Colonel Morrow, of the Twenty-fourth Michigan, who laid a bridge and actually made a crossing. These demonstrations had the desired effect, inducing General Jackson to move down with a portion of his corps to repel any advance from that quarter, and prevent the sudden turning of the rebel position.

This activity, so long before the real movement commenced, served to keep the enemy in a state of excitement and uncertainty, and, having roused himself so often at the cry of "wolf," was finally quiescent when the wolf actually came. General Lee held his army in his fortifications along the bluffs, Jackson's corps

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\* General Doubleday's testimony.

† General Lee's official report, "Conduct of the War," p. 114.

on the right, stretching from Massaponax creek to the neighborhood of Deep run, and Longstreet's opposite and above Fredericksburg.

Orders for the movement of the Eleventh corps, which was to take the lead, and the Twelfth, which was to closely follow, were issued by General Hooker on the evening of the 26th of April, with the direction that the matter of destination should be regarded as strictly confidential. At daylight, on the morning of the 27th, these two corps moved out, encamping that night near Hartwood church, a distance of fourteen miles, and on the following night in the neighborhood of Kelly's ford, on the Rappahannock, a distance of fourteen miles more. Here General Slocum, of the Twelfth, received orders from General Hooker to assume general command of both corps, and, after having laid a bridge, to cross the Rappahannock and press immediately forward to the Rapidan, which he was also to pass without delay. Accordingly 400 men of General Buschbeck's brigade crossed the stream in boats, and having driven away the force which was on guard, without molestation laid the bridge, under the direction of Captain Comstock. At 6 P. M. of the 28th, the bridge was begun, and by 10 it was completed, and the column commenced crossing. Owing to the darkness the movement was considerably hindered, and it was daylight before all were over. In the march of the 29th the Twelfth corps took the lead, and during the progress encountered the cavalry brigades of Fitz-Hugh and W. H. F. Lee, under the command of General Stuart. The Sixth New York cavalry, under Lieutenant-Colonel McVickar, led the column of Slocum, and skirmishing was kept up the entire day, in which some captures were made, but the march was not materially delayed. The Eleventh corps followed the Twelfth, and its rear was annoyed by two light pieces of the enemy, supported by cavalry. The Seventeenth Pennsylvania cavalry, Colonel Kellogg, acted as rear guard, and with the assistance of a portion of Stoneman's cavalry, which by chance came up, amply protected the Union forces. The Fifth corps, under command of General Meade, also marched for Kelly's ford, and arrived in time to cross and commence the march on the 29th, simultaneously with the other two, but on a parallel road leading to Ely's ford, some distance below the Ger-



mania. The Germania crossing was disputed\* by two companies of infantry, which were at the time engaged in rebuilding the bridge. When apprised of the approach of the Union forces, they took shelter in a mill near by and opened an annoying fire. The Second Massachusetts and the Third Wisconsin regiments were wheeled into line, and, advancing, soon compelled them to surrender. Under the direction of Generals Geary and Kane, the bridge was rapidly completed, and by 4 o'clock on the morning of the 30th the three corps were across. A short distance to the left of these corps, at United States ford, was a considerable force of the enemy—the brigades of Mahone and Posey, of McLaws' division—which could have seriously delayed the passage at these fords had they been skilfully handled; but they seem not to have been aware of the advance of the Union forces until they were already across both streams, when all opposition by a slender column would have been futile.

It would seem that General Lee himself had received no information of the strength of the demonstration being made against him from this quarter, nor had a suspicion that General Hooker was to attack him from that direction, until mid-day of the 30th. It is true that he says in his official report that General Stuart had reported to him that a body of troops was moving up the Rappahannock, and that during the forenoon of the 29th that officer had reported that the enemy had crossed in force near Kelly's ford, and later in the day had announced that a heavy column was moving from Kelly's towards Germania ford, on the Rapidan, and another towards Ely's ford on that river. But what preparations did Lee make to check this advance? He sends General Anderson, a division commander, with one brigade, Wright's, to Chancellorsville, which he was to use, together with such detachments as he could gather up in that vicinity, to hold that place, at the very moment when three corps of the Union army were engaged in crossing the Rapidan, and in a few hours would be upon him. Is this the provision which a commander, with the foresight and experience of General Lee, would make for checking it, if he supposed that the main body of the Union army, led by General Hooker in person,

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\* General Slocum's official report.

was advancing in force from that quarter? "On the night of the 29th," I quote General Lee's words, "General Anderson was directed to proceed towards Chancellorsville, and dispose Wright's brigade, and the troops from Bark Mill [United States] ford to cover these roads." But what dispositions was General Lee making in other directions for joining battle, which he was now convinced, by the activity in the Union camp, was impending? His official report informs us: "As in the first battle of Fredericksburg, it was thought best to select positions with a view to resist the advance of the enemy, rather than incur the heavy loss that would attend any attempt to prevent his crossing. Our dispositions were accordingly made as on the former occasion." That is, with his entire army, save one brigade, he was marshaling, in his old position facing the river, to meet an advance from that direction. General Sedgwick, in his official report, says: "During the day, Wednesday, April 29th, the command was held in readiness to cross, while the *enemy was rapidly intrenching on his entire front*, and occasionally shelling Reynolds' position on the left." This, then, was what General Lee was doing during the 29th, and up to noon of the 30th—preparing to meet an attack from his front, and entirely unconscious of the fact that the main body of the Union army had already opened the doors, which for six months he had endeavored to keep locked with so great vigilance, and was already in his rear. But the proof of General Lee's unconsciousness of the direction from which the blow aimed at him was to come, does not rest alone upon inferential evidence. In his testimony before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, General Pleasanton, who commanded the Union cavalry in the advance to Chancellorsville, says: "At a place called the Wilderness I captured a courier from General Lee with a dispatch \* in Lee's own handwriting. It was dated at 12 o'clock that day, and I captured it at 1 o'clock [of the 30th], only one hour from his, Lee's, hands. It was addressed to General Anderson, and read: 'I have just received reliable information that the enemy have crossed the river in force. Why have you not kept me informed? I wish to see you at my headquarters as soon as possible.'" Thus, by Lee's own confession,

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 27.

at noon of the 30th, he had but just received reliable information that the Union forces had crossed the river in force, when at that moment three corps of that army were already at Chancellorsville, or in close proximity thereto, and other corps with a base of supply already open, marching thither. Such an exploit is scarcely matched in the annals of warfare!

The three corps, which as we have seen crossed the Rapidan on the night of the 29th, resumed the march early on the morning of the 30th. The Fifth corps, General Meade, crossing alone at Ely's ford, and having the inside and shortest route, reached Chancellorsville at 11 A. M.\* of that day. The column on the Germania ford road, the Twelfth and Eleventh corps, moved at daylight of the 30th, the White star division, General Geary, leading. General Stuart, in command of the main body of the rebel cavalry, having sent Colonel Owen's regiment in advance to delay the march of the Union column, himself hung upon its right flank, and at the Wilderness tavern took position and attacked, bringing up two pieces of artillery; but two of Geary's regiments were promptly deployed and soon cleared the way. The Twelfth corps reached Chancellorsville about two o'clock on the afternoon of the 30th, and the Eleventh, which followed closely, encamped in rear in the vicinity of Doudall's tavern. General Slocum, in pursuance of orders received on his arrival at Chancellorsville, assumed command of the three corps there concentrated. He was directed if he found,† by a rapid advance of his cavalry towards Fredericksburg, that the enemy were not detaching forces from the main body, in any considerable strength to oppose him, to advance at all hazards, until he uncovered Bank's ford, where he was to select a strong position and fortify; but if he found the enemy in force in his front to select the best position he could about Chancellorsville, and prepare to defend himself.

It would seem that General Slocum, on his arrival at Chancellorsville, did not feel himself justified in pushing forward and uncovering Bank's ford, though he says nothing in his official report of having made any attempt to ascertain whether there was a

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\* Meade's official report, MS.

† Order G., issued April 28th, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 119.

reasonable chance of doing so, and one would gather no inkling from reading it that his orders required him to do so. Nor does General Pleasanton, in his testimony, make any reference to any reconnoissance having been made at this juncture towards Fredericksburg, with this end in view. We learn, however, from the enemy's reports that the Union cavalry did manifest considerable activity. When General Anderson, who had been sent out to Chancellorsville with Wright's brigade, arrived at that point, at midnight of the 29th, he found that the brigades of Mahone and Posey, which had been on duty defending United States ford, had retired, with the exception of a small detachment, and were already there. But General Anderson, after consultation with these officers, determined to retire further towards Fredericksburg, as the position at Chancellorsville was not favorable for defense.\* General Anderson says in his report: "Wright's and Posey's brigades retired from Chancellorsville by the plank road and Mahone's by the old turn-pike. Whilst they were moving off, and before the pickets had been called in, the cavalry of the enemy, under cover of fog and rain, dashed upon the picket on the Ely's ford road, and captured a part of one company. They subsequently attacked the rear guard of Mahone's brigade, but were so effectually repulsed that we were no further annoyed by them during the movement." General Stuart† also says: "Hearing that the enemy had already reached Chancellorsville by the Ely's ford road, I directed my march by Todd's tavern for Spottsylvania Court-House. Night overtook us at Todd's tavern, and anxious to know what the commanding general desired me to do further, I left the command to bivouac here, and proceeded with my staff towards his headquarters, near Fredericksburg; but had not proceeded a mile before we found ourselves confronted by a party of the enemy, double our own, directly in our path. I sent back hastily for a regiment, which, coming up (Fifth Virginia cavalry, Colonel Tyler), attacked and routed the party. But, in the meantime, another body of the enemy's cavalry came in rear of the Fifth. Receiving notice of this, I gave orders to withdraw the Fifth from the road, and sent

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\* General Anderson's Rep., "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 262, Docs.

† Official Report of General Stuart, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 269, Docs.

for the brigade to push on at once. This was done, and by the bright moonlight a series of charges routed and scattered this expedition which had penetrated to within a mile or two of Spottsylvania Court-House. It has been since ascertained that this expedition was by no means an insignificant affair, and but for the timely arrival of this cavalry on the spot, and its prompt and vigorous action, might have resulted disastrously. Artillery, as well as trains, were passing Spottsylvania unprotected at the time."

General Slocum contented himself with posting his forces in an advantageous position about Chancellorsville, the Twelfth corps in the woods on a line nearly parallel to the Plank road, with the left resting near Chancellorsville, and the right connecting with the Eleventh corps, which reached out to Hunting run along the Plank road and Germania ford road, and the Fifth corps extending from Chancellorsville towards the river, covering United States ford.

Thus these three corps having, by a circuitous route, reached their destination at Chancellorsville, the Second was brought up by the direct road. Leaving Gibbon's division near Falmouth, General Couch had moved, with the divisions of Hancock and French, on the morning of the 28th to Bank's ford, and while a demonstration of crossing was made here by throwing up works,\* Carroll's brigade was sent forward to United States ford to open a road to the river, and lay two pontoon bridges. At 10 o'clock on the morning of the 30th, the advance of the other corps across the Rapidan having practically uncovered this ford, the bridges were laid, and at 3 P. M. the columns commenced crossing. By 9 P. M. the corps was in bivouac near Chancellorsville.

While these operations were proceeding so successfully and with so little annoyance, the rest of the army was no less active, though the purpose of all these movements, and where the blow that was impending was to fall, remained a secret with him who had conceived them. General Hooker well knew that he could never transfer his army to the right bank of the Rappahannock and flank the rebel position, if his opponent knew his designs. Hence he employed four of the seven corps of his army to mask the movement of the other three.

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\* General Couch's MS. Report.

As we have already seen, the Second corps had been set to digging in front of Bank's ford, as if to force a passage, on the 28th. This ford is six miles above Fredericksburg by the north bank, but only three by the south. Wilcox's brigade of Longstreet's corps was guarding it on the rebel side, with Perry's brigade of the same corps in supporting distance in the direction of Fredericksburg. The three remaining corps of General Hooker's army—the First, General Reynolds, the Third, General Sickles, and the Sixth, General Sedgwick, all under the general direction of the latter—moved from camp on the 28th, and by nightfall were in the positions assigned them in readiness to cross the river, the Sixth corps near the mouth of Deep run, the place of Franklin's crossing of the December preceding, the First corps a mile lower at the mouth of Pollock's Mill creek, and the Third corps between the two in readiness to spring to the assistance of either, as necessity might require. The troops encamped without fires so as not to attract the attention of the foe, nor disclose the numbers engaged in the movement. Under cover of darkness boats were noiselessly taken on the shoulders of the men to the river's bank. At the Pollock's Mill crossing, General Reynolds detailed seventy-five men to each of the forty-four boats to be employed in crossing. It was daylight before they had arrived at the bank of the stream. Three thousand men of General Wadsworth's division stood ready to force the passage. Scarcely had twenty boats touched the water before the enemy, on the opposite shore, opened a hot fire of musketry from his rifle-pits, and was soon after reinforced by an additional regiment. In the face of this fire it was impracticable to cross, and the Union sharp-shooters disposed along the river's bank were insufficient to silence it. Seeing that the enemy were hugging closely their fortifications, and were unsupported, the Twenty-fourth Michigan and Sixth Wisconsin regiments, Colonels Morrow and Bragg, having been taken beyond range below, were ferried over, and flanking the hostile pits, under the leadership of General Wadsworth in person, quickly put to flight their defenders, when the remaining regiments of the brigade crossed. By a little past 10 o'clock on the morning of the 29th, two bridges had been constructed under the direction of General Benham, and the re-

maining brigades of Wadsworth's division crossed. To completely cover the bridges it was necessary to extend the line well to the left, so as to occupy the high bluff towards the mouth of Massaponax creek, and some rifle-pits and light defences were thrown up. Ransom's and Stuart's batteries were also thrown over and put in position. The loss in this operation was about sixty killed and wounded. Ninety prisoners were taken from the Sixth Louisiana and the Twenty-third Georgia regiments, including several officers. The remaining two divisions of the corps were brought down near the crossing and sheltered in the ravines of the creek.

At the upper crossing, near the mouth of Deep run, shortly before daylight of the 29th, Brook's division of the Sixth corps crossed in boats, Russell's brigade leading. The enemy made some resistance, but was soon driven, and his works occupied. Three bridges were then laid, and the remaining divisions were held in readiness to cross. In the meantime, General Hunt, chief of artillery, was busy fringing the crests of the bluffs along the left bank with guns to protect the bridges, and check any advance of the enemy. \*Ten guns of the artillery reserve, and twenty-four light rifles of the Sixth corps were ranged on the bluff covering the bridges of the upper crossing, while upon the river bank, so arranged as to get a cross-fire on the enemy's pits, were planted twelve light twelve-pounders, the whole under command of Colonel Tompkins, of the First Rhode Island. At the First corps crossing twenty light rifled pieces were put upon the bluffs, and a like number close in upon the river bank, which were commanded by Colonel Waynwright, of the First New York. A mile further down, near Traveller's Rest, so disposed as to command the bridge across the Massaponax, and cover the left of the troops that had crossed, were sixteen guns under Lieutenant-Colonel E. R. Warner, Inspector of Artillery.

Seeing this activity in the Union army, and five bridges laid, with forces already across in position for their protection, the heights, on the Union side overlooking these operations, bristling with artillery, General Lee evidently concluded that it behooved him to bring up his available forces to meet so formidable demon-

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\* General Hunt's official report, MS.

strations. Accordingly, that part of Jackson's corps which had been in camp at Grace Church, was hurriedly moved forward, and, about the time the bridges were completed,\* commenced moving into position in great strength, his skirmishers occupying the Bowling Green road, and apparently formed in two lines of battle in the railroad cut and rifle-pits just behind the crest which had been the Union line in the first Fredericksburg battle, with reserves in the woods. The rebel force which had been sent to Port Royal to check any demonstrations that might be made in that quarter, was called in, but, on approaching Massaponax bridge, was compelled, by the fire of the Union artillery posted at Traveller's Rest, to make a wide detour in reaching its position in Jackson's corps. During the night of the 29th and the entire day of the 30th, there was little change or activity in the rebel lines save in fortifying.

At midday of the 30th, at the moment when the right wing of the Union army was arriving at Chancellorsville, and the Second corps was well on its way thither by United States ford, General Sickles, with the Third, quietly withdrew from his support of Sedgwick and Reynolds, and marched away to join the forces at Chancellorsville, crossing United States ford early on the morning of the 1st of May, and reporting at his destination at 9 A. M. The withdrawal and the march were skillfully masked, and the enemy seemed not to have detected the movement. Thus were five corps concentrated at Chancellorsville by the morning of the 1st, with Reynolds and Sedgwick still threatening to cross below Fredericksburg.

At 5 P. M. of the 30th, General Jackson having strengthened his works and awaited the advance of the Union lines, began to be restive, and opened fire from his batteries in position on the hill near Captain Hamilton's house, on Wadsworth's working parties and upon the bridges. The rifled guns on the opposite bluffs replied. The fire was kept up until nearly dark, during which it became necessary to move the Second division of the First corps, which had been massed in the ravines where it was sustaining some damage, to the shelter of the river road. One of the boats in the bridges was struck, which necessitated its replacement. With these

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\* General Reynolds' report, original MS.



exceptions no injury resulted to the Union forces from this noisy demonstration. As soon as night closed in one of the two bridges at the lower crossing, and one of the three at the upper, were taken up and removed to Bank's ford, in anticipation of its being uncovered by the advance of Slocum from Chancellorsville, as General Hooker had purposed, if by any possibility practicable.

The campaign thus far had been signally successful. Every movement undertaken had been carried to a triumphant issue in the time allotted, without impediment, and with trifling molestation. Every feint and every demonstration had been made precisely as ordered. A powerful and vigilant enemy had been thrown completely off his guard, and signally foiled in every attempt to oppose or to checkmate the series of movements being made from almost every point of the compass. What had been looked upon as the insurmountable difficulty—the crossing of the river and getting at the foe—had been overcome without a mishap or a seeming hazard. The thirty-two miles of out-post and intrenchment, executed with endless labor, to make the stream impassable, had been brushed aside as though it had been gossamer, and the major part of the Union army had been planted in rear of its old antagonist with scarcely the loss of a man or the firing of a shot. What General Newton had characterized as a tactical impossibility, and only effected by accident, had been deliberately planned and brought to consummation without a miscarriage.

Colonel MacDougal, of the British army, one of the ablest of living military writers, has published a book on "Modern Warfare," in which he devotes no inconsiderable part to the Passage of Rivers, describing in detail and with a master hand the most celebrated instances, and classes this movement of General Hooker across the Rappahannock with Hannibal's passage of the Rhone, Alexander's of the Hydaspes, Napoleon's of the Po and the Danube, and Wellington's of the Douro and Adour. He says: "The passage of the Rappahannock by General Hooker, in April, 1863, manifested higher military qualities than any which had previously been undertaken by the United States forces, and is instructive on account of the secrecy, rapidity and energy of the different movements." In

his remarks on Stratagems he says: \* "It will be found that all great generals have employed largely this element of victory—the *dolus* or stratagem—for the purpose of making their enemy believe what they wished him to believe; and, consequently, as actions are regulated by belief, of making him act as they wished him to act. There is no operation in which a great advantage may not be gained by imposing a false belief on an enemy." And on opening his chapter on the Passage of Rivers, he says: "The passage of a considerable river in the face of an enemy is one of the most difficult operations of war, if attempted by open force. The examples of this are, however, comparatively few. There are two methods which have usually been employed by offensive armies for the passage of great rivers: 1. Wholly by stratagem, in deceiving the enemy as to the intended point of passage, so that he is induced to guard especially one portion of the river to which his attention has been purposely directed by the measures of his opponent, while the latter then effects a passage by surprise at an unguarded point. 2. By a mixture of force and stratagem combined. Napoleon's passage of the Po, in 1796, at Piacenza; of the Beresina, in 1812; Wellington's passage of the Adour, in 1813; Louis Napoleon's passage of the Ticino, in 1859, and Hooker's passage of the Rappahannock, in 1863, are examples of the first. Wellington's passage of the Douro, at Oporto, in modern times; Alexander's passage of the Hydaspes, and Hannibal's passage of the Rhone, in ancient history, are examples of the second." †

On the evening of the 30th of April, having brought his army into position, in accordance with his original design, leaving General Butterfield, his chief of staff, in whose capacity and judgment he had confidence, to represent him at that point, General Hooker broke up his headquarters at Falmouth and transferred them to Chancellorsville. On his arrival there he felt, as was natural, having accomplished so great a military feat, some degree of exultation. In his most sanguine expectations he had not anticipated that his corps would all reach their positions without severe strug-

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\* "Modern Warfare and Modern Artillery, by Colonel MacDougal," p. 57. London: John Murray.

† MacDougal, p. 293.

# Chancellorsville Field, 1st to 6th of May, 1862

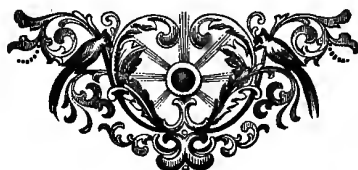
UNION TROOPS

CONFEDERATE TROOPS



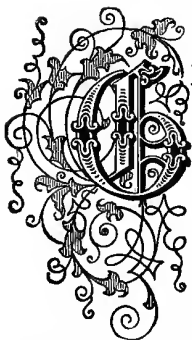


gles, as is shown by his provision for corps on the march or in their demonstrations in front of the enemy to go to each other's assistance. He felt that in its complete accomplishment a tactical victory had already been achieved, and accordingly announced his success to the army in the following congratulatory order: "It is with heartfelt satisfaction that the commanding general announces to the army that the operations of the last three days have determined that our enemy must either ingloriously fly or come out from behind his defences and give us battle on our own ground, where certain destruction awaits him. The operations of the Fifth, Eleventh and Twelfth corps have been a succession of splendid achievements."



## CHAPTER V.

### THE CONTENDING HOSTS BROUGHT FACE TO FACE.



GENERAL LEE became aware at noon of the 30th, about the hour when General Sickles was starting for Chancellorsville, that the Union troops had crossed the river, in force, far above Fredericksburg. He had heard, through messengers from General Stuart, that Union columns were demonstrating on the upper Rappahannock; but he had a considerable force in that direction, and he appears to have had little solicitude about any real advance from that quarter. General J. E. B. Stuart, one of his most reliable generals, with the main body of the cavalry, was between the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers, who, had he been on the alert and disposed to make a stand, could have greatly delayed the column at Kelly's ford. Generals Mahone and Posey, with two full brigades, were at United States ford. General Wilcox, with a brigade, was at Banks' ford, and General Perry in supporting distance of Wilcox, on the heights overlooking Falmouth. Lest the demonstration from the fords above might prove to be something more than he anticipated, at 9 o'clock on the evening of the 29th General Lee ordered Anderson to proceed to Chancellorsville with Wright's brigade. Wright was bivouacking at the time near Anderson's headquarters, on the military road, and at 12 midnight was on the march. Anderson, having ordered the column in motion, rode forward, and arrived at Chancellorsville at about the same hour that his column commenced to move, 12 midnight. General Posey, in his official report, says: "On the evening of the 29th ult., being then in camp with Brigadier-General Mahone,

near the United States ford, we were advised by our scouts and the cavalry pickets, who were posted at Ely's ford and Germania bridge, that the enemy had crossed in heavy force at these points, and were advancing on the Ely and plank roads towards Chancellorsville. Upon consultation, we concluded to leave five companies of my brigade (Nineteenth Mississippi regiment) and one regiment of General Mahone's brigade, to watch and defend the United States ford, while we moved our brigades to Chancellorsville." Hence, on the arrival of General Anderson at Chancellorsville, at midnight of the 29th, he found these two brigades already there, and in position covering the Germania and Ely's ford roads. Wright's brigade, having ten miles or more to march, did not arrive until daylight on the morning of the 30th.

General Anderson had decided that he could make no headway in opposing the advancing columns of Hooker in this flat, wilderness country, with only his three brigades. Good highways lead from Chancellorsville to Fredericksburg; but the numerous streams emptying into the Rappahannock cross these roads at right angles, and have worn away numerous little ravines and slight depressions, which make good defensible positions for blocking an advance from either direction. Accordingly, at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 30th, Anderson led these brigades back some four or five miles towards Fredericksburg, Wright's and Posey's by the plank road, and Mahone's by the turnpike, and having selected good ground on which to make a stand, where were cultivated fields and ample opportunity for manœuvring troops and observing the approach of an enemy, fell to fortifying. "At 8 o'clock A. M.,"\* says General Wright in his report, "I reached the desired position, and formed line of battle on a range of hills in rear of Hopewell nursery, with my right resting upon the plank road. My men had marched twenty-seven miles in less than twenty-one hours, and most of the time in a heavy rain and through deep mud, and when I halted were almost completely exhausted. After a hasty reconnoissance of the position, I concluded to change my line to the crest of a range of hills, upon which the small-pox hospital and an old church were situated, and about three-quarters of a mile in rear [towards

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\* Official report, "Rebellion Record," Vol. X., p. 288.

Fredericksburg] of my first position. Here I formed as before, with my right resting upon the plank road, and my left upon the Fredericksburg and Gordonsville railroad. During the afternoon, having received a few intrenching tools, I commenced digging a line of rifle-pits in front of my position, and by working during the whole night I had, by seven o'clock on Friday morning (May 1st), my entire line well protected, having also, during the night, kept a detail at work throwing up an epaulement for two pieces of artillery on the right of the plank road."

Posey took position ; his left connecting with Wright at the plank road, and his line extending to the intersection of the mine road with the turnpike, and Mahone, in continuation of the line of Posey, on a line slightly refused, along an extended clearing upon a ridge leading off towards Bank's ford, and covering it from an advance from the direction of Chancellorsville. "Upon arriving," says General Anderson, "at the intersection of the old mine and plank roads, I met Colonel W. P. Smith, chief engineer, army of Northern Virginia, and Captain Johnstone of the engineer corps, who had been sent by the commanding general to examine the position and establish the line of intrenchments. The work of intrenching was commenced immediately after the line had been selected, and was continued with great diligence and activity throughout that day (the 30th), the night following, and the early part of the next morning."

It will thus be seen that the best engineering skill in the rebel army was employed in laying out that line, and, though the troops were worn out with hard marching, they labored uninterruptedly from the morning of the 30th to nearly noon of the 1st of May in throwing up works. Lunettes were constructed around the guns, and the whole line was made as strong as skill and labor could render it. At midnight of the 30th, General McLaws, with three brigades of his division, Kershaw's, Semmes' and Wofford's, left the intrenchments at Fredericksburg and moved up to the position of Anderson, where they were put into the works already constructed along the continuation of this ridge in the direction of Bank's ford, but partially *en echelon*, and sharply refused, forming nearly a right angle with the main line stretching along the crest of Smith's hill,



the left connecting with the right of Anderson. Perry's brigade was also brought up and formed on the right of Wofford's; and Wilcox's, which was near by, was formed on the right of Perry. " \* This," says General Wilcox, in his report, "brought my command to occupy a line of rifle-pits running from Bank's ford to within a few hundred yards of the mine road."

If the topography of the country at this point is examined, or the map, which shows the configuration here very clearly, it will be seen that the ridge, extending from a point overlooking Bank's ford, along the divide between Mott run and the head waters of Massaponax creek, and abutting upon the left on the old railroad bed, is an excellent one for defense. It would seem as though the clearings and roads along its rear had for years been preparing for the precise purpose to which it was now put. By sunrise on the morning of the 1st these intrenchments, so skilfully planned and elaborately constructed, were amply manned. On the afternoon of the 30th strong reconnoissances were sent out from Chancellorsville by the Union forces already arrived there, though Slocum, who was distinctly charged by the orders of General Hooker to do so, makes no mention of it in his report. But General Meade says: "As soon as Chancellorsville was occupied, I directed General Devin, with his whole cavalry force, to send out a strong picket on the plank road, and to send another party out on the Bank's ford, or river road, to feel for the enemy and ascertain how much of our front was uncovered. About 3 P. M. I received a report from Colonel Devin, that he had driven in the enemy's pickets at the Bank's ford road, and had pursued them till he could see their line of battle, and from the wagons visible he concluded they were about to evacuate the position. I immediately directed General Griffin to advance a brigade to support the cavalry, and if practicable to drive in the infantry and uncover Bank's ford. About an hour afterwards, Griffin reported to me that he was with his brigade in the presence of a superior force of the enemy, and that he would require support if he had to maintain his position. I then ascertained to my surprise that the cavalry, instead of going down the Bank's ford road as they reported and led me to believe, had gone down the old Rich-

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\* Official Report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 294.

mond turnpike, which makes a detour to Chancellorsville, coming in again to the plank road about three and a half miles from Chancellorsville. Upon referring to Major-General Slocum, who had arrived and assumed command, the question of withdrawing or supporting Griffin, it was determined to withdraw him, which was accordingly done."

General Mahone, who was lying in a position to meet the head of any Union column moving from that direction, says, in his report: "Shortly after we had taken up our new line, at the intersection of the mine and turnpike roads, the enemy came down the turnpike in considerable force of cavalry and infantry; but nothing occurred at this point beyond a little skirmishing with his sharpshooters and reconnoitring parties."

General Hooker, in his order to Slocum, instructing him to take command of the three corps upon their arrival at Chancellorsville, apparently desired that his lieutenant should push on and get a position uncovering Bank's ford, as it would thus bring the two wings of his army into close proximity, and would enable one to go to the support of the other, if hard pressed. But he did not make the order imperative, and adds a final clause\* indicating that he would be satisfied if Slocum should reach Chancellorsville and make all close and safe there. He evidently did not desire that Slocum should take any great risks; for he realized that the Union column, as it approached Fredericksburg, would be constantly nearing the main body of Lee's army, and there would be danger that Lee would fall upon it, if he saw it approaching unsupported and isolated from the main body, and destroy it piecemeal. "If your cavalry is well advanced from Chancellorsville you will be able to ascertain whether or not the enemy is detaching forces from behind Fredericksburg to resist your advance. If not in any considerable force the General desires that you will endeavor to advance at all hazards, securing a position on the plank road, and uncovering Bank's ford, which is also defended by a brigade of rebel infantry and a battery." But, as if fearing that this bold advance might involve Slocum in a movement that he would be unable to execute, and, as if impressed with a presentiment of the existence of Anderson's line of intrench-

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\* See the exact wording of this order in the Appendix.

ments which we have just described, which Slocum would have run into had he attempted it, Hooker adds: "The General desires that not a moment be lost until our troops are established at or near Chancellorsville. From that moment all will be ours." And, still, as if hardly satisfied with this, and strongly desiring Bank's ford, he adds, as a sort of postscript: "It will be much easier to replenish batteries, ammunition, etc., by Bank's ford than by United States ford, if you should succeed in uncovering it."

No sooner had General Hooker arrived at Chancellorsville, which he did on the night of the 30th and established his headquarters, than he began to concert measures for securing what he unmistakably coveted so strongly, the uncovering of this ford. His purpose was to advance his army five or six miles nearer Fredericksburg, provided he could do so without hazarding too much; but in no event to let go the position which he had taken up at Chancellorsville, or yield control of the avenues leading to United States ford, until he was absolutely certain of having, and securely holding, Bank's ford. His orders, therefore, for the movement of his corps, and the posting of his forces were with a view to these two ends. The Fifth corps was to be thrown upon the river road accompanied with three batteries, and was to advance to a point midway between Mott and Colin runs—the identical position taken up by Anderson and McLaws, and which had been so elaborately traced by General Lee's engineers, and strongly fortified by Anderson's division—the movement to be completed by 2 o'clock on the afternoon of the 1st of May. •The Twelfth corps, including its batteries, was to advance by the plank road, and take position along the ridge passing near Tabernacle church, where it was to be by 12 m., and at this church General Hooker's headquarters were to be established—the very ground which, for twenty-four hours, had been held and fortified by the rebel forces, and the self-same church where had been the headquarters of Generals Anderson and McLaws, but all unknown to the Union commander. The Eleventh corps was to follow up the Twelfth, and be massed along the plank road, one mile in rear of the latter, as a support, and to cover that flank in the event of the right being turned. These three corps, in the positions indicated, were to constitute the moving column, and

were to take the offensive. The remaining forces were to act as corps of observation, and to defend Chancellorsville and the United States ford roads. One division of the Second corps, with one battery, was to take position at Todd's tavern, with strong detachments thrown out in the direction of the enemy. The other divisions and batteries of the Second corps were to be massed out of the road near Chancellorsville. The Third corps was to be massed, as fast as it arrived, about one mile from Chancellorsville, on the United States ford road, excepting one brigade and a battery, which were to take position at Dowdall's tavern. General Pleasanton, with the cavalry not engaged, was to remain at Chancellorsville. Thus, with an iron grasp, General Hooker clung to Chancellorsville, and at the same time made provision for the advance to the new position. From the moderate force put in the moving column it was evidently not intended for the fighting of a general battle.

At 11 o'clock, on the morning of the 1st, General Slocum commenced the advance on the plank road, General Sykes' division of regulars took the turnpike, and Griffin, followed by Humphreys, the river road.

If now we turn from these dispositions of General Hooker to the camp of General Lee, we shall discover what forces the Union corps, which constituted the moving column, will be likely to encounter as they advance. General Lee, in his official report, says: "The enemy in our front, near Fredericksburg, continued inactive, and it was now apparent that the main attack would be made upon our flank and rear. It was, therefore, determined to leave sufficient troops to hold our lines, and with the main body of the army to give battle to the approaching column. Early's division of Jackson's corps, and Barksdale's brigade of McLaws' division, with part of the reserve artillery, under General Pendleton, were intrusted with the defence of our position at Fredericksburg, and at midnight, on the 30th, General McLaws marched with the rest of his command towards Chancellorsville. General Jackson followed at dawn next morning (May 1st), with the remaining divisions of his corps. He reached the position occupied by General Anderson at 8 A. M., and immediately began preparations to advance. At 11 A. M. the troops moved forward upon the plank and old turnpike roads."

Thus, at dawn of the 1st of May, the whole rebel army, with the exception of an insignificant force left in the intrenchments before Fredericksburg, was on its way towards Chancellorsville, and by 8 o'clock A. M. had arrived at the fortified position at Tabernacle church, held by Anderson and McLaws, and, at 11 A. M., under the command of General Jackson in person, was commencing an advance from this position towards Chancellorsville at the precise hour when Generals Slocum and Meade, at Chancellorsville, were commencing the movement on the same roads in the direction of Fredericksburg. Thus, at an hour before midday of the 1st, the heads of the two armies, scarcely three miles apart, were commencing a movement towards each other. Anderson, with the brigades of Wright and Posey, took the lead on the turnpike; McLaws, with his three brigades, Mahone leading, on the plank road; Wilcox and Perry, of Anderson's division, co-operated with McLaws; and Jackson's troops followed Anderson on the plank road. Wright had not proceeded far before he met the skirmishers of Slocum, and on coming up to the main body, which was deployed along the skirt of a heavy forest with an open field in its front, disposed his forces for an encounter. Under the immediate orders of General Jackson, Alexander's battalion of artillery was wheeled into position and opened a heavy fire upon Slocum's line, the rebel infantry pushing up and engaging warmly the Union troops. Finally, Wright was withdrawn, and ordered to gain the bed of the Fredericksburg and Orange railroad, and push rapidly forward so as to flank the Union right. This was accomplished with little opposition, and Wright pushed on towards Welford's furnace. On the turnpike, Sykes met Mahone's brigade, and \*drove in the rebel advanced line, but soon encountered a much heavier force than his own, which outflanked him on all sides. General Warren, who was with Sykes, immediately reported the situation to headquarters. But General Hooker had already discovered that he was encountering the concentrated forces of the Confederate army, and that his own were hemmed in on three narrow roads leading through an almost impenetrable forest, where it was impossible for him to manœuvre them; and, moreover, that he was being flanked on the

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\* Testimony of General Warren, "Conduct of War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 45.

right. He accordingly determined to arrest the movement and withdraw his moving columns to the position about Chancellorsville, which they had occupied the previous night and partially fortified. This was easily accomplished without loss, and the enemy followed up and took position conforming to that of the Union line. The Fifth corps, General Meade, was placed on the left extending along the Mineral Spring road, which follows the ridge between Mine run and the Mineral Spring run, and reaching down to the river bank, Humphreys having the left, Griffin next him, and Sykes on the right, though the two latter did not take their positions until daylight on the morning of the 2d, having been detained in front of Chancellorsville until the coming up of the Second corps, Sykes having a brisk skirmish at six o'clock on the evening of the 1st, handsomely repulsing the enemy's overventure-some advance. Upon the right of Sykes was French's division of General Couch's corps, the Second, which reached the turnpike and covered Chancellorsville. Hancock's division of this corps was in an anomalous position in front of French, but on advantageous ground which it would have been disastrous to have allowed the enemy to occupy, with his right connecting with the left of General Slocum's corps, the Twelfth, which held a long stretch along the old turnpike, nearly at right angles to the general line already indicated. Geary, commanding the Second division of the Twelfth, was upon the left between the turnpike and the plank, and his right extending across the plank along the crest overlooking an eastern tributary of Lewis creek, and stretching out nearly to Hazel grove, where it was joined by the First division, Williams', which reached around to a church on the Orange plank road; a mile and a half from Chancellorsville westward, the line of the corps describing substantially a half circle, whose diameter was nearly two miles on the Orange plank. At the point in the Twelfth corps, lying nearest to Hazel grove, Birney's division of the Third corps was interposed, facing south and striking the plank again in the neighborhood of Melzi Chancellor's. Finally the three divisions of the Eleventh corps, General Howard, in the order of Steinwehr, Schurz and Devens, Second, Third and First, were posted along the plank and Germania ford roads, its extreme right, and the right of the whole army resting

upon the crest of the ridge overlooking the west branch of Hunting run. This line, thus hastily assumed, in face of the pressure of the enemy, had been in some portions partially fortified, but was now rectified and improved with the anticipation of here fighting a general battle.

It was a position liable to many objections; but the best that was attainable. It had several angles where portions of the line were liable to be enfiladed by the enemy's artillery. It was, with the exception of the left, near the river, almost a dead level with scarcely any commanding positions, where the artillery could play to advantage. It was in the midst of a dense forest, "of not very large trees, but very difficult to get through, mainly of scrubby oak, what they call black-jack there, so that a man could hardly ride through it, and a man could not march through it very well with musket in his hand, unless he trailed it." The extreme left had a good natural barrier for its protection—the river; but the right rested in the forest, where, though far removed from the direction from which the enemy was expected to advance, it was still liable to be turned unless vigilantly guarded and protected by works.

General Hooker had anticipated that, if the cavalry, which he had sent out under Stoneman and Averell to sever the communications in rear of the rebel army and break up its avenues of supply, was successful, General Lee, when he found the Union army upon his rear, would retreat either in the direction of Gordonsville or Richmond. Hence, in making the forward movement from Chancellorsville, General Hooker had not anticipated serious opposition. When, however, he found that he must fight a battle against nearly the entire rebel army, with but a fragment of his own in hand, he decided to retake the position from which he had advanced, and which he still firmly held with his reserves, rather than to risk a battle, where the advantages of position would all be on the side of the enemy.

In his last order to Sedgwick, before leaving his headquarters at Falmouth, he said: "†It is not known, of course, what effect the advance will have upon the enemy, and the general commanding

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\* General Warren's testimony, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. I., p. 44.

† "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 123.

directs that you observe his movements with the utmost vigilance, and should he expose a weak point attack him in full force and destroy him. If he should show any symptoms of falling back, the general directs that you throw your whole force on to the Bowling Green road, and pursue him with the utmost vigor, turning his fortified positions by the numerous by-roads which you can make use of for that purpose. If any portion of his organized forces should pass off to the east of the railroad, you will, by detachments, pursue until you destroy or capture him." But, notwithstanding these explicit orders, General Sedgwick remained quiet the whole day, although it was known on his lines that the enemy had withdrawn from his front; for General Reynolds says, in his official report: "The 1st of May was passed by the troops holding the same position. The enemy's force opposite us was very much diminished, though still strong on their extreme right where their battery was posted." On the morning of the 1st of May, that the rebel forces might be detained as long as possible in their position before Fredericksburg, and thus favor the movement from Chancellorsville to Bank's ford, General Hooker sent orders for General Sedgwick to make a demonstration in force at 1 o'clock P. M. of that day. It was to be as severe as possible without being an attack, and this threatening attitude was to be preserved until further orders. By some mischance in the transmission the order did not reach Sedgwick\* until 5 o'clock that evening, four hours after the demonstration was to have been made, and was not received by General Reynolds until 6 P. M. Orders were given by General Sedgwick for making the demonstration as directed, and the First corps, with General Newton of the Sixth in support, was displayed in force as if to move to the attack. But the troops had scarcely gained their positions before notice, countermanding the order, was received from General Hooker. But the demonstration would have been unavailing had it been made at the time required by the terms of the order, as the movement of the rebel army out of its fortifications had commenced at midnight of the 30th, twelve hours before this demonstration was to have been made, and by 9 o'clock, on the morning of the 1st of May, the head of that army was already moving into General

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\* Official Reports of Sedgwick and Reynolds, Original MSS.



Anderson's line of intrenchments covering Bank's ford from the direction of Chancellorsville.

General Hooker had formed large expectations from the devastation which his cavalry had been set to accomplish. This anticipation was fully shared by General Halleck, and by President Lincoln himself. In General Halleck's communication to General Burnside, under date of January 7th, 1863, in which he urges in strong terms a forward movement, he says: "In all my communications and interviews with you since you took command of the Army of the Potomac, I have advised a formal movement across the Rappahannock. . . I particularly advised you to use your cavalry and light artillery upon his communications, and attempt to cut off his supplies and engage him at an advantage. . . Advantages can be gained by crossing smaller forces at other points, to cut off his lines, destroy his communications, and capture his rear guards, outposts, etc." Mr. Lincoln was so impressed with the importance of the operations of the cavalry in this Chancellorsville campaign, that in a communication of the 7th of May, after the campaign itself was ended, counselling a renewal of active operations, he had counted on a complete breaking up, as the result of the cavalry raid, of Lee's communications with Richmond; for he says in a telegram of the 14th, † "When I wrote on the 7th, I had an impression that possibly, by an early movement, you could get some advantage, from the supposed facts that the enemy's communications were disturbed, and that he was somewhat deranged in position." General Hooker had justly placed great reliance on his cavalry, as it had been organized and drilled with extreme care, and had come to possess real self-reliance and efficiency.

In the orders already noticed given to General Stoneman, who commanded the cavalry corps in making the movement which was commenced on the 13th of April, and which was arrested by the rain, is found the substance of what was required of it when the march was resumed two weeks later. It was to turn the position on the enemy's left, and, coming in between the rebel army and Richmond, isolate it from its supplies, check its retreat, and inflict

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\* "Conduct of the War," Part I., 1865, p. 186.

† "Conduct of the War," Part I., 1865, p. 150.

upon it every possible injury which would tend to its discomfiture and defeat. By the original instructions the entire cavalry force of the army of the Potomac, bating one brigade, was to move in a body to Culpepper, demolish Fitz-Hugh Lee's cavalry brigade, understood to be stationed there, destroy the infantry guard at Gordonsville, known to be insignificant, and then strike for the Richmond and Acquia Railroad, which, being the shortest route from Fredericksburg to Richmond, was Lee's main avenue of supply. From the 13th to the 27th Stoneman had remained on the upper Rappahannock, where the storm and floods had left him. On the latter day he had received notice from the commanding general to be prepared to move on the contemplated raid on the 29th, but on the same day he, in company with his subordinate commanders, was notified to meet a representative from headquarters at Morrisville, a point a little back from Kelly's ford, at 2 P. M. of the 28th. General Hooker went up in person, and gave him additional written instructions, and such verbal directions and exhortations as should inspire him with an earnest zeal in the undertaking. By these supplemental instructions, the cavalry force, instead of moving as one body, was divided into two columns. The one under Stoneman's immediate command, consisting of Gregg's division and Buford's brigade, of Pleasanton's division, was to proceed direct for the Richmond and Acquia Railroad, and commence its destruction at once, while the other, under Averell, was to first operate against the rebel forces on the line of the Orange and Alexandria railroad, a movement which was to serve as a mask to the other column, and then turning south join Stoneman in his work of destruction. The instructions respecting the purpose of Averell's movements, and that he was to rejoin the main column, were explicit; even the point where it was recommended that they should unite was suggested. "You are further directed," says the order, "to determine on some point for the columns to unite, and it is recommended that it be on the Pamunky and near that line." Lest there might be some mistake or misapprehension as to the orders, it was added: "You will please furnish the officers in command of these two columns with a copy of this and your original instructions."\*

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\* Testimony of General Hooker, "Conduct of War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 137.

The conference at Morrisville did not break up till five o'clock P. M. The instructions to General Stoneman required all his forces to cross the Rappahannock that night, or if that should be impracticable, it was imperative that all should be over by eight o'clock A. M. of the 29th. Immediately on receiving his orders, Stoneman proceeded to call in his command and commenced the passage. He could find but one point where the river was fordable, and it was 5 P. M., instead of 8 A. M., before he was across. On the first day out the column of General Averell had some artillery practice, and some sharp skirmishing with the Thirteenth Virginia cavalry, under Colonel Chambliss. At 10 P. M. of the 30th Stoneman crossed the Rapidan at Raccoon ford, Buford having crossed below and sent up a detachment on the south bank of the stream which dispersed the rebel guard, capturing an officer and a few privates. At 2 A. M. of the 2d of May, Gregg arrived with his command at Louisa Court-House, on the Virginia Central railroad, and by 10 A. M. the entire column with Stoneman had concentrated there. At this point the troops were set to work destroying the road itself, telegraph lines, bridges, water-tanks, and depots, which was accomplished for a distance of eighteen miles, and the bridges along the main highways leading to Richmond. During the night of the 2d, Stoneman, having marched by the way of Yanceyville, reached Thompson's cross-roads, where, having broken his column into a number of detachments, he sent them out in all directions to continue the work of devastation and create all possible consternation. \* "One party, the First New Jersey, under Colonel Wyndham, was to strike the James river at Columbia, at the junction of the James and Rivana rivers, to destroy, if possible, the large canal in the direction of Richmond, doing all the harm possible. If thought expedient, a party was to be sent across the James river to make a dash on the railroad bridge over the Appomattox. Another party, the Second New York, was to push on to the railroad bridge over the Chickahominy, destroy it and the telegraph, and operate in the direction of Richmond, which is only four miles distant from the bridge. Another force, Twelfth Illinois cavalry, Colonel Davis, was to strike the two railroads at or in the vicinity

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\* General Stoneman's Official Rep., MS..

of Ashland on the Fredericksburg, and Atler's on the Virginia Central, and do all the harm it could. Another party, the First Maine, and First Maryland, with a section of artillery, all under General Gregg, was to follow down the South Anna river, destroy all the road bridges thereon, and, if possible, the two railroad bridges across the river. Another party, the Fifth cavalry, under Captain Drummond, was to follow this last, and see that the destruction was complete. Captain Merritt, with a flying party of the First Maryland, was sent out to do what he thought he could accomplish in the way of destroying bridges."

These parties all got off by 3 A. M. of the 3d, and were allowed twelve hours to get to their several destinations, all to be ready to strike in concert, so that information should not be conveyed by telegraph, and opportunity be given for concentrating and guarding the vulnerable points. Colonels Wyndham, Kilpatrick and Davis were directed either to return to the point of rendezvous, or to push on to Yorktown or Gloucester point. The rest were ordered to return. A company under Captain Harrison, of the Fifth regulars, was sent to Shannon cross-roads, where it had an encounter with a force of rebel cavalry, in which it suffered some loss in killed, wounded, and prisoners, before the main body under Buford could come up, when the enemy made good his escape in the direction of Charlottesville. Of the detachments which had been sent out, Colonels Kilpatrick and Davis pushed on through to Gloucester point. The rest all returned to the standard of Stoneman, who had, on the morning of the 5th, moved to Yanceyville on the South Anna, whence, having accomplished all that he felt capable of undertaking, having heard nothing of Averell, who was expected to join him, and his supplies running low, he determined to return again to the Rappahannock, where he arrived and crossed on the 8th of May.

As has been already observed, Stoneman's entire cavalry force had, by the supplemental orders received on the 28th at Morrisville, been divided into two columns, of which Buford had command of one, with which Stoneman himself moved and exercised the general command, whose movements we have just considered, and Averell had direction of the other. The latter's command comprised the brigades of B. F. Davis, McIntosh, and Sargeant, and

Tidball's battery of six guns, in all about 3,400 sabres. This column had been sent in the direction of Gordonsville and Culpepper at the beginning of the expedition, for a diversion in favor of the main column with Stoneman, and was to rejoin the latter as soon as this diversion had accomplished its purpose. Soon after separating, Averell received from Stoneman the following direction: "The major-general commanding directs me to say that we have been delayed by high water, etc., and that he desires you to push the enemy as vigorously as possible, keeping him fully occupied, and, if possible, drive him in the direction of Rapidan station. He turns the enemy over to you." Interpreting this notice as a sort of release from rejoining the main column, as directed by the positive and reiterated orders of General Hooker, he skirmished over the field of the battle of the 17th of March, in which he easily drove the enemy, passed Culpepper on the following day, moved over the old battlefield of Cedar mountain of the previous year, and bivouacked at night at Rapidan station. A day was here spent in fruitless attempts to force a passage of the river—the cavalry of W. F. H. Lee holding the opposite bank. Abandoning the attempt he marched at 6.30 A. M., of the 2d, for Ely's ford on the Rapidan, where he arrived at 10.30 P. M. Here he reports having had some slight skirmishing with the enemy; but here he remained, for the most part inactive, during the night of the 2d, and day of the 3d—the most trying and critical period of the battle of Chancellorsville, the smoke of the field sweeping his nostrils, and the echoes of the terrible fray saluting his ears.

Thus was this whole cavalry expedition, on the results of which General Hooker and the authorities at Washington had built high hopes, rendered almost wholly abortive. It was estimated by General Hooker at the time, and subsequent disclosures prove his estimates to have been under, rather than in excess of the reality, that either of the two commands, into which Stoneman's force was divided, outnumbered the entire rebel cavalry force between the Rappahannock and the James.† Why then was the outcome of the expedition so barren of results? A few facts will make plain the mys-

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, p. 139.

† Hotchkiss and Allan, p. 24.

tery. General Hooker's instructions, as contained in his orders of the 12th and 28th of April, could not have been made more explicit. In the former he had said: "You will march with all your available force, except one brigade, for the purpose of turning the enemy's position on his left, and of throwing your command between him and Richmond—isolating him from his supplies, checking his retreat, and inflicting every possible injury," etc. . . . "From there it is expected that you will be able to push forward to the Acquia and Richmond railroad, somewhere in the vicinity of Saxton's junction," etc. . . . "As the line of the railroad from Acquia to Richmond presents the shortest one for the enemy to retire on, it is more than probable he will avail himself of it, and the usually travelled highways on each side of it, for this purpose; in which event, you will select the strongest positions, such as the banks of streams and commanding heights, in order to check or prevent it." . . . "The general desires you to understand that he considers the primary object of your movement the cutting of the enemy's communications with Richmond by the Fredericksburg route, checking his retreat over those lines, and he wishes to make everything subservient to that object." . . . "Bear in mind that celerity, audacity, and resolution are everything in war, and especially is it the case with the command you have, and the enterprise on which you are about to embark." In the supplemental order of the 28th, he says: "The operations of this column [Averell's] to be considered as masking the column which is directed to move by forced marches to strike and destroy the line of the Acquia and Richmond railroad." . . . "You are further directed to determine on your point for the columns to unite, and it is recommended that it be on the Pamunkey, and near that line, as you will then be in position with your full force to cut off the retreat of the enemy by his shortest line."

Thus it will be seen that the whole burden of these instructions was, "Get upon the line of the Acquia and Richmond railroad, and break up and destroy the enemy's line of communications by that route." To Stoneman he says this is "the primary object of your movement," "push forward to the Acquia and Richmond railroad," "move by forced marches to strike the Acquia and Rich-

mond railroad," "the columns to unite on the Pamunkey, as you will then be in position with your full force to cut," etc. Indeed, so anxious is the commanding general to impress upon the minds of the leaders of his cavalry what the special thing is that he wants them to do, that he iterates and reiterates it even at the expense of good taste in the rhetorical style of his orders.

Any student of military history who reads these instructions and asks himself, "what was the plain duty of Stoneman?" can arrive at no other conclusion than that he should have pushed for that line of road, and without let or hindrance broken up and destroyed it, and held every highway and defended every ridge to the last extremity, even if it had been at the utter sacrifice of his command.

But what are the facts? Did Stoneman go to this line of road at all? No! Did he march as if he would go there? No! Was he met by the enemy and cut to pieces, and thus prevented from going there? No! He scarcely saw an armed man in his whole expedition, going and coming, and suffered no loss. Why then did he not obey his instructions, and march to that line of railway and break it up? Crossing the Rapidan at Raccoon ford, he marched to Louisa Court-House, to Yanceyville, to Thompson's cross-roads, keeping on the line about midway between and as far away as possible from the lines of the Acquia and Richmond, and the Orange and Alexandria railways, the two roads on which troops would be likely to be moving, and on which he might be expected to encounter opposition, contenting himself with destroying the line of the Virginia Central railroad, a line running east and west off into the Shenandoah valley, having no significance whatever as a line of supply to the enemy's army, and not mentioned in the commanding general's orders. At Thompson's cross-roads, which was the limit of his advance, he fixed his headquarters, and breaking his column up into fragments, so weak and insignificant as to have no power nor capacity to successfully meet a foe, he sent them out in every conceivable point of the compass, a part to destroy what they were not sent to destroy, and when arrived at their destination found that they had come unfurnished with the means\* requisite to accomplish

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\* Colonel Wyndham, who had been sent "to destroy the large canal aqueduct over the Rivanna," found on his arrival at the aqueduct that he had no blasting material in hand with which to accomplish his purpose.

the destruction which they desired to effect, or were too weak to accomplish it, and a part were sent upon the Acquia line to break it, or to cross it on their way to Gloucester point, whither they were to rendezvous. By substantially the same route as he came, Stoneman returned again to the starting-point upon the Rappahannock. General Averell with his division did not even cross the Rapidan in the execution of his part of the breaking up of the Acquia railway, losing sight entirely of Saxton's junction, and the railroad crossing of the Pamunkey named in the commanding general's orders, and recrossed the Rappahannock on the 4th of May at United States ford, with a loss of one killed and four wounded.

But why did not these officers obey their instructions, and march at once to the breaking up of the Acquia railroad, and the holding it with a firm grip at all hazards? Why should the leader of the expedition refuse, or neglect to attempt to reach the point designated, and why content himself with destroying a road that did not lead at all in the direction of the enemy's lines of supply, and his second in command—invested with equal numbers as his own—manifest so little desire to join his chief in the grand purpose of the raid? General Hooker, in his testimony on the "Conduct of the War," puts a very mild construction upon their conduct. He says: "It is charitable to suppose that Generals Stoneman and Averell did not read their orders, and determined to carry on operations in conformity with their own views and inclinations." But this is hardly a satisfactory explanation.

†General Stoneman, in his official report, says: "The desire of the commanding general that I should 'understand that he considers the principal objects of your movement the cutting of the enemy's connections with Richmond by the Fredericksburg route, checking his retreat over those lines [that line], and he wishes you to make everything subservient to that object,' was fully carried out, as not only the railroad bridges on the two railroads leading out from Richmond northward were destroyed, but all the road bridges across the South Anna and several across the North Anna were completely destroyed." But General Hooker testifies before the committee: "One party, under General Kilpatrick, crossed the

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, p. 140.

† MS. copy.



Acquia and Richmond railroad, and the fact that on the 5th the cars carried the rebel wounded and our prisoners over the road to Richmond, will show to what extent the enemy's communications had been interrupted. An examination of the instructions General Stoneman received, in connection with the official report of his operations, fully sustains me in saying that no officer ever made a greater mistake in construing his orders, and no one ever accomplished less in so doing."\*

Respecting the progress which he expected the two columns to make, General Hooker says: "From the place of crossing the river, Kelley's ford, the infantry had about twenty-five miles to march to Chancellorsville, and the cavalry between fifty and sixty to their post on the Acquia and Richmond railroad. Hence I concluded that they would reach their respective destinations about the same time. The infantry, it will be remembered, reached Chancellorsville at noon on the 30th of April; the cavalry, without encountering any resistance deserving mention, not until the 3d and 4th of May, and was disposed of in utter disregard of the spirit and letter of their instructions in a manner to be of no service to us or injury to the enemy."

Of the reason of this dilatoriness on the march and delay in getting to the ground, which, by his own quoting of Hooker's command cited above, he well understood to be the scene of operations, "which were the principal object of the movement," we cannot well divine, but a single expression in his note to Averell may furnish a clue. "The major-general commanding [Stoneman] directs me to say that we have been delayed by high water, etc., and he desires you to push the enemy." The infantry forded the Rapidan considerably below where the cavalry did and was not at all delayed, either at the Germania, or Ely's ford. The "etc." in this communication is ambiguous. It would seem as though he was a little troubled to frame his excuse for being delayed, and concluded to lump it under the general "etc." At all events that "etc." is unfortunate.

For the seeming unwillingness of General Stoneman to go where his orders required him to go, a clue is given by another paragraph

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, p. 140.

found in his official report. It will be remembered that General Hooker in his orders had told him that he would be "likely to run against Fitz Hugh Lee's brigade of cavalry consisting of about 2,000 men," which he assured him was all the cavalry force that would trouble him, and that his watchword should be "fight, and all his orders fight, fight, fight." By turning to that part of General Stoneman's report, which details his return, there will be found the following frank statement: "After thinking the matter over [his return], I determined to send General Buford with 650 picked horses of his brigade to threaten any force in the vicinity of Gordonsville, and induce Lee and Hampton to believe that we were going to get out by that way, and another force under Captain Rodenbaugh was sent in the direction of Bowling Green, with the view of threatening the enemy's communications in that direction, and, under cover of night with the main body, to take the middle road leading through Tolersville, and crossing the North Anna near Victoria iron works, from thence to Orange Springs, where all were to rendezvous the next day. All our plans and calculations worked admirably, and though we had no little difficulty in finding and following the almost impassable roads, owing to the inky darkness of the night and the incessant pouring of the rain, the whole command was assembled at Orange Springs at 12 M. of the 6th."

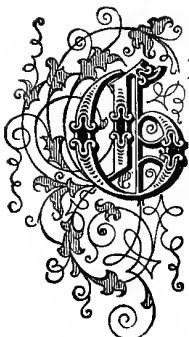
The purpose of General Stoneman was not then to seek the enemy and fight, as his instructions required him to do, but the object of his strategy was, how "to get out" without meeting an armed foe, and to that end to steal away "under cover of night," by "the middle road." In a communication to General Halleck and the War Department of May 9th, General Hooker says:\* "It is unnecessary for me to add that this army will never be able to accomplish its mission under commanders who not only disregard their instructions, but at the same time display so little zeal and devotion in the performance of their duties."

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\* Telegrams, "Conduct of the War," 1865, p. 231.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A DAY OF MANŒUVRES.



GENERAL LEE had no sooner reached the Union front at Chancellorsville, than he pushed vigorously up on all sides, till he had developed the exact position and strength of General Hooker's lines. Colonels Owen and Wickham, of the cavalry, were sent out upon the right, the one upon the river road, and the other upon the Old Mountain, or Mine road, who found all firm and strong upon that flank. In the immediate

front of Chancellorsville he was confouted by heavy intrenchments crossing the turnpike and plank roads, well protected with abatis and artillery advantageously posted to sweep all approaches.\* General Stuart, with a portion of Fitz Hugh Lee's cavalry, was at the Welford iron furnace, whither Wright's brigade was sent, and where a brisk action was had at evening of the 1st, with the skirmishers of Slocum's corps, which had been pushed out to meet them. Wright sent for guns, but only to discover the Union line strongly held by infantry and artillery.

By these demonstrations Lee was satisfied that the major part of the Union army was concentrated in and about Chancellorsville, and to undertake to attack at any point on his front, from Scott's dam on the Rappahannock on his right, to Welford furnace on his left, would entail immense slaughter, and probably end in defeat. Like his own position at Fredericksburg, the power of numbers and skill in attack would avail little against it. He accordingly turned, for a solution of the difficult problem presented, to some

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\* General Lee's official report, see Appendix.

means of flanking the position. His headquarters, on the night of the 1st, were at the point where his own line crossed the plank road. There, under the shadow of a pine tree, seated on some cast-away cracker-boxes, General Jackson and himself discussed the situation. There was apparently but one vulnerable point in the Union lines, and that was the right. The right had no natural defence like the left, as it rested in a comparatively flat country on the Germania ford road. This latter fact would be readily inferred, as the distance to the Rapidan or the Rappahannock is too great for the Union line to have reached to either. The two generals had their maps spread out before them, on which they readily traced the position of the Union army. General Jackson proposed to take his whole corps present,\* and, marching quite around the whole Union front, plant himself on the flank and rear of the Eleventh corps, where, if he were once drawn up unobserved, he could strike that corps, and crumple it like a leaf in havoc's hand.

But, in the meantime, what would be left to fight the Union army, and keep it in position? Only the two divisions of the First corps, Anderson's and McLaws'. But these were heavy and efficient divisions, and were already well intrenched. Besides, General Jackson would nowhere be so far away from the Union line, but that he could at any moment turn into position and move down upon Hooker's front, should it become troublesome. There were two circumstances which greatly favored this plan. It was well known to the rebel leaders, that both the Union generals and the Union government had anticipated that a raid by cavalry on the rebel communications would cause the rebel army to retreat. The later plans of Burnside had been based on that idea. Could the impression prevail in the Union camp that Lee was in full retreat, apprehension of an attack would be lulled, and preparations to meet it circumvented. But the condition which most strongly favored the manœuvre was the nature of the country in which the two armies were placed. On the open battle plains of Europe it would have been madness to have proposed thus to sever the two wings of an army in the face of an opposing foe, and present each in turn

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\* General Lee's official report, see Appendix.

to be overwhelmed. But here was an impenetrable forest—the “wilderness” indeed—where almost everything was screened from view, and where it was next to impossible to make rapid movements, and at the opportune moment, on which alone success depends. Hence, a plan of operation, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have evinced an utter lack of sound military policy, in the present position had a fair promise of success. It was accordingly adopted, and Jackson withdrew his corps from the front, McLaws taking the place of Jackson’s troops upon the rebel right and Anderson upon the left, and prepared for the march.

The night of the 1st was passed in both armies in comparative quiet. At the Union headquarters the question was discussed, whether to attack or await attack. The latter policy was adopted. At a little past midnight, General Hooker telegraphed to General Butterfield at Falmouth, “Direct for all bridges to be taken up at Franklin’s crossing and below, before daylight, and for Reynolds’ corps to march at once, with pack-train, to report at headquarters.” Reynolds\* received the order at 7 A. M., and immediately put two of his divisions in motion for United States ford, by way of Bank’s ford, having received an intimation that the latter ford might possibly be open. His other division, that of Wadsworth, which had crossed the river and was still upon the Fredericksburg side, was withdrawn to the north bank, the enemy opening with his artillery upon the bridge, and destroying one of the boats, while the division was in motion. This fire was soon silenced by the Union artillery posted on the opposite shore, the boat replaced, and the crossing completed, when Wadsworth followed the rest of the corps. At 6 P. M., at about the hour when Jackson was opening his attack upon Howard, General Reynolds reported in person at Chancellorsville, and received orders to post his corps.

General Jackson was not in haste to commence his flanking movement, waiting until the morning was well spent.† The most con-

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\* General Reynolds’ official report, MS. copy.

† General Dole, who led on the march, passed Aldrich’s tavern between 6 and 7 o’clock.—Dole’s “Rep. Reb. Rec.,” Vol. X., p. 279.

*Note.*—In his report General Dole speaks twice in this connection of Todd’s tavern. He evidently means Aldrich’s tavern, as Todd’s tavern was it from five to seven miles away by the nearest road, that it could be reached from the plank road and the position Dole was in on the night of the 1st.

venient road for his column to move upon was one leading from Aldrich's tavern, on the plank road, across Lewis creek to the furnace road, and it presented the advantage of being screened from view throughout its whole course. Moreover, Dole's brigade, which led the column, had been encamped for the night in the immediate vicinity of the tavern. But Jackson chose to take the road which led along the rebel intrenchments to the Welford furnace, with the evident purpose of protecting the rebel left as long as any part of his corps was in supporting distance, and he may have desired that his march should be observed, to strengthen the impression in the Union army that a retreat was in progress. Indeed, if we follow him on this march we cannot avoid the conclusion that he very adroitly masked the flank movement, and made it appear almost beyond question to be a retreat. There are a number of roads leading to the right, bearing across the Union front, on which he might have moved, materially shortening his route, and saving precious time, where he would have been equally screened from view as upon the one he took. But, instead of taking them, he moved several miles in precisely the opposite direction to that in which he needed to go. When, finally, he came to the Brook road, apparently the last highway by which he could reach his destination, instead of turning abruptly to the right and filing on to it, he turned to the left and marched directly away towards Todd's tavern. It is reported that scouts were sent off at this point, who, entering the Union lines, testified that the head of the rebel column had taken the direct road to Richmond. But Jackson had not proceeded more than half a mile before he wheeled to the right on to a private road, which for about two miles runs nearly parallel to the Brook road, into which it finally debouches within a mile and a quarter of the Orange plank road. These views respecting the design of General Jackson in taking the line of march he did may be entirely fanciful, as they rest only upon inferential evidence. Indeed the report was current at the time that Jackson had decided on no definite route before starting, but inquired his way of the inhabitants as he went.

General Jackson had no sooner got under way, than General Lee, with the forces left to him, commenced a vigorous demonstration,

beginning on his extreme right, and having the attacks taken up in succession by his forces further to the left, until he had completely compassed the whole Union front. These demonstrations in the immediate vicinity of Chancellorsville were made with strength, involving the use of infantry and artillery; but further to the Union right were less violent, and apparently with only cavalry and light artillery. General Warren, chief engineer of the Union army; in his report\* says: "On the morning of Saturday, May 2d, the enemy from the heights on our left opened his guns upon our wagons in the open field near Chancellorsville, but without much effect. He also made his appearance on the plank road near, and our fire wounded a few men, who reported that they had missed the road, and that they were marching toward our right. During the forenoon the enemy made several feints of attack by a sudden rush upon our lines, seizing our advanced skirmishers, drawing our fire, and getting the location of our line and its strength. These operations were repeated at intervals, gradually extending to our right." General Sickles, in his testimony, says,† "There had been a little skirmishing, as I supposed, and an occasional rattle of musketry going along in the front, at different points, but no firing which would indicate a serious engagement." General Pleasanton is even more explicit.‡ "I had noticed in the morning that the enemy had commenced on our line—that is, near Chancellorsville, and would throw in a couple of regiments or so of troops, with a yell and a volley; there would be a little skirmishing, and then there would be no more of it at that point. I then noticed that that would occur at intervals still further to our right, as if a body of troops was following us around. We were in a dense wood there. This thing had attracted my attention early in the morning, and I was noticing these different attacks; that they would throw in a body of skirmishers, and if they found resistance from us they would go somewhere else."

"The firing we heard," says General Schurz in his report, "all along the line of the army during the day, seemed to indicate that the enemy was feeling our front in its whole length. Toward evening the enemy began to throw shells from two pieces placed on

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 57.    † Ibid., p. 6.    ‡ Ibid., p. 28.

an open space in the woods opposite General Devens' left, but doing no injury."

In the Union camp during that night of the 1st, and morning of the 2d, there was no less anxiety and vigilance. General Warren says,\* "I was in favor of advancing;" but has the candor to admit that he "urged it with more zeal than convincing arguments." General Hooker strongly favored the awaiting the attack of the enemy, and of contracting and strengthening the lines. Upon the right he felt apprehensive, but Generals Slocum and Howard expressed themselves so confident of being able to hold their positions, that he reluctantly yielded, and did not order their contraction as he had contemplated. General Warren says,† "The general's original determination to await the attack had in it also the design to contract our line, and throw back the right to a better position, our left being secure. On the assurance of the commanders on the right that they were abundantly able to hold their position against any force which the nature of the ground in their front would enable the enemy to bring against them, and because they thought to fall back would have some of the demoralizing influence of a retreat, it was decided to make no change in the line, but to strengthen it with breastworks and abatis. The sound of the axe broke the stillness along the lines of both armies."

Nevertheless, early on the morning of the 2d, General Hooker ordered both Generals Slocum and Howard to contract and correspondingly strengthen their lines, and directed General Sickles to throw in one of his divisions upon the space thus vacated, which resulted in pushing the enemy from the commanding ground about Hazel grove, which proved on the following day of vital moment. He also directed General Sickles to make a reconnoissance in front and to the left of Chancellorsville.‡ "Two reliable regiments led by circumspect and intrepid commanders," the Eleventh Massachusetts, Colonel Blaisdell, and the Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania, Colonel

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\* Testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 56.

† Report, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 56.

‡ General Sickles' official report, MSS.; also Adjutant-General's Rep. of Mass., 1863, p. 592.



Tilghman, with a detachment of Berdan's sharpshooters, were sent in the direction of Tabernacle church, on General Hancock's front, and proceeded until checked by the enemy's intrenchments, where they remained the whole day, bringing in some prisoners, and closely watching the enemy's movements.

On the afternoon of the 1st, General Graham, with a battery of light twelves, was sent to Dowdall's tavern to report to General Howard to strengthen the Eleventh corps. General Birney, to whose division Graham belonged, says: "General Howard met General Graham, and seemed surprised that he had been sent there; stated that his position was very strong, and the Eleventh corps fully able to hold it. He told him to halt and not take position until he (Major-General Howard) could advise with Major-General Hooker of the situation of affairs. General Graham sent me word of this, and soon after I received an order countermanding the previous one, and Graham with brigade and battery rejoined the division at the Chancellor house."† General Sickles, on the morning of the 1st, noticing as he was crossing United States ford that it had no guard, left Mott's brigade and Seeley's battery to hold it, and after massing his corps near Chancellorsville directed Whipple to connect by outposts with Mott on the right, and with Graham, who had been ordered to Dowdall's tavern, on his left, thus making the circuit of the army complete. But, subsequently, when the army resumed

\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 34.

† The conversation between Howard and Graham, as reported by an aide-de-camp of the latter, was given in an article contributed to "Onward" for December, 1869: "Howard met Graham halfway from Chancellorsville to Dowdall's tavern. 'Where are you going?' Howard asked Graham. 'To Dowdall's tavern.' 'Perhaps you mean Todd's tavern?' 'No, Dowdall's.' 'That cannot be; there must be some mistake about this. My [Howard's] headquarters are there.' 'I do not know anything about that,' replied Graham; 'such are my orders. Perhaps they are afraid of an attack, and I am sent to support you.' 'That cannot be,' replied Howard. 'I would send my compliments to the whole rebel army, and invite them to attack me in my present position; and if it was not out of compliment to General Sickles, I would order you back.' To this Graham, having observed that he 'would not be justified in obeying such an order,' turned to Briscoe, of Birney's staff, and said to him: 'There seems to be some misunderstanding here; you had better go back with Ballard, his aid, to General Birney and find out.' Graham then proceeded to Dowdall's tavern, where he found General Carl Schurz and a number of officers of the Eleventh corps; while Howard kept on to Chancellorsville to see General Hooker."

its position at Chancellorsville, these dispositions for guarding the rear were abandoned and the divisions of Sickles' corps were called in.

General Hooker, ever vigilant, early on the morning of the 2d, rode along his entire line, examining the position of his troops, and their readiness for receiving the enemy. He was accompanied upon the right by General Sickles, who now commanded the old corps of General Hooker, which was posted upon that wing. In some places the dispositions were not satisfactory, and General Hooker suggested some changes, which were promptly made. In the main the posting of the troops and their defensive works for meeting a front attack—and he had no intimation at that time of there being any other—seemed judicious, and were approved. On this tour of inspection General Hooker was everywhere received with the warmest enthusiasm, clearly showing that the army reposed implicit confidence in him. General Sickles says, in his official report: "It is impossible to pass over without mentioning the irrepressible enthusiasm of the troops for Major-General Hooker, which was evinced in hearty and prolonged cheers, as he rode along the lines of the Third, Eleventh, and Twelfth corps."

At a little past 9 o'clock, on the morning of the 2d, General Hooker, having completed his inspection of the lines and returned to his headquarters, found awaiting him couriers from General Birney, who had fortunately that morning established himself on the commanding ground about Hazel grove, informing him that a column of the enemy was visible moving continuously across General Birney's front towards the right, accompanied by trains, guns and ambulances, and had been so moving since 8 o'clock. This was the head of Jackson's corps, which had by this time reached the point on the flanking march, where the road he was following crosses Lewis' creek, and winds up the hill on the opposite bank over clear ground. This intelligence put an entirely new phase on the aspect of affairs, and impressed General Hooker with the deepest solicitude. He immediately dictated the following despatch, dated at 9.30 A. M., to Generals Slocum and Howard: "I am directed by the major-general commanding to say that the disposition you have made of your corps has been with a view to a front attack by the

enemy. If he should throw himself upon your flank, he wishes you to examine the ground and determine upon the position you will take in that event, in order that you may be prepared for him in whatever direction he advances. He suggests that you have heavy reserves well in hand to meet this contingency. The right of your line does not appear to be strong enough. No artificial defences worth naming have been thrown up, and there appears to be a scarcity of troops at that point, and not, in the general's opinion, as favorably posted as might be. We have good reason to suppose that the enemy is moving to our right. Please advance your pickets, for purposes of observation, as far as may be safe, in order to obtain timely information of their approach."

It should be observed that, although this notice was addressed to Generals Slocum and Howard, it could have little application to the former, as he was now separated from the latter by the intervention of General Sickles' corps, and General Slocum was already well intrenched and in the proper position for meeting an attack. But it could not have been framed in more explicit or pointed terms to apprise General Howard of the falsity of his position for meeting a flank attack, and of the importance of throwing up works, having heavy reserves in hand, and pushing pickets far out upon his front. It is difficult to conceive how what actually occurred some nine hours later could have been more completely foretold, and the preparations needed to meet the emergency more fully pointed out. It should be remembered that when General Hooker visited the lines in the morning, and expressed himself satisfied with the position of Howard's corps, it was before any intimation had been received that the enemy had a purpose to turn his right flank. But now, having been apprised that the rebel legions were on the move, he instantly grasped the situation, and saw clearly that Howard was in no condition to withstand a flank attack.

It is evident, too, that the Eleventh corps was thoroughly apprised of Jackson's movement, and General Hooker was explicitly informed that preparations were in progress to meet the threatened advance. For General Howard sent a despatch, dated May 2d, 10 A. M. to 11 o'clock, at headquarters of the Eleventh

corps, to General Hooker, in these words: \**"From General Devens' headquarters we can observe a column of infantry moving westward on a road parallel with this on a ridge about one and a half to two miles south of this. I am taking measures to resist an attack from the west."* With this assurance General Hooker felt reliance that the necessary measures were being taken to make a stout resistance. Portions of the Second and Third corps were drawn up and held in reserve near Chancellorsville, in readiness to be thrown in any direction as emergencies might demand.

A further evidence that General Hooker fully comprehended the significance of this movement of Jackson, will be found in the disposition which was made of Williams' division of the Twelfth corps, which was posted on a line at right angles to the plank road, looking westward, upon a ridge a mile and a half from Chancellorsville, Williams' left connecting with the right of Geary, and his right extending in the direction of United States ford. This position was fortified, and constituted a second interior line in exactly the position required to check an attack of the enemy on Howard's right flank, should Howard be unable to meet it. This order quoted above, sent to General Howard at 9.30 A. M., and this fortified position in which he had put General Williams, is a sufficient answer to any imputation upon the commander of the Union forces that he believed the rebel army retreating, and was taken unawares by the movement of Jackson. The telegram sent to Sedgwick, *"We know that the enemy is flying, trying to save his trains. Two of Sickles' divisions are among them,"* is quoted as evidence that Hooker misconceived the purpose of Jackson. But his testimony† before the committee of Congress discloses his purpose in sending the message. He was desirous of hastening the movements of Sedgwick, and sent this despatch immediately on its receipt from Sickles, though he distrusted its accuracy. General Hooker says: *"At the time this news was received by me I was of the impression that the general was mistaken, but nevertheless felt that no harm could follow from its transmission to General Sedgwick."*

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\* Original copy. This despatch is written in pencil on a half sheet of commercial note paper, crumpled and stained, and the words, *"Respectfully, O. O. Howard, Major-General,"* are in General Howard's own hand.

† *"Conduct of the War,"* 1865, Vol. I., p. 147.

The position which General Howard occupied was a good one to meet either a front or a flank attack, there being several commanding ridges running at right angles to the plank road, where resolute stands could have been made, and the ground looking southward, where the line of defences along the plank road had been thrown up, was also good for meeting an advance from that direction.

General Sickles had no sooner been informed of the passage of this column of the enemy at the furnace, than he hastened to the point of observation on General Birney's front, and directed that officer to open upon the moving troops with artillery. Clark's rifled guns\* were immediately placed in position, and by a few well-directed shots compelled Jackson's infantry to take to the woods, thus disappearing from view, and the artillery and trains to hasten on in great confusion. This continuous column, consisting of all arms, had been observed for nearly three hours, showing that it was a movement in force, either in retreat or for a flank attack on the right. General Sickles says, in his testimony: "The direction which the enemy's column took, judging from what information we had of the country, and from the maps we had, was susceptible of two interpretations. It was, perhaps, a movement in retreat; for they had a large train with them, a great many wagons, and all arms, except cavalry, were in large force." General Sickles immediately communicated the intelligence of these movements to the general-in-chief, and also to Generals Howard and Slocum, and received orders to advance cautiously with a sufficient force to ascertain the significance of the movement, and if possible sever the two wings of the rebel army.

When General Jackson, who moved at the head of his column, had arrived at this point in the morning, he posted the Twenty-third Georgia regiment, Colonel Best, on the road leading up to Hazel grove, to guard the approaches to the road on which his corps was passing, and, subsequently, Lieutenant-Colonel Brown placed a battery in position to meet a threatened advance of Union troops.

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\* This battery of rifled guns, it may be observed in passing, was the one which opened the battle of Gettysburg on the afternoon of the 2d of July, when the column of Longstreet, moving to flank the Union left, was first observed.

General Lee also sent Posey's and Wright's brigades of Anderson's division to this point, which were posted at right angles to the road on which Jackson's corps was passing and facing Lewis' creek ; and the brigades of Archer and Thomas of Hill's division—the rear of Jackson's column—seeing that there was likely to be trouble, were turned back and went into position on the opposite side of Lewis' run in support of the guns of Brown.

Sickles had no sooner received orders to move than he put Birney's division in motion with two battalions of Berdan's sharpshooters thrown forward as skirmishers, and accompanied by Livingstone's and Randolph's batteries. Realizing that he would be likely to meet serious opposition at so vital a point in the rebel lines, Sickles was directed by General Hooker to call on the commanders of the Eleventh and Twelfth corps for supports, which he did, and Barlow's brigade of Steinwehr's division was sent by General Howard, which advanced in support of Birney's right, and Williams' division by General Slocum, which formed on Birney's left, and at the same time Whipple's division of the Third corps was brought up in support. Sickles was thus prepared to make a strong attack. Some time was consumed, however, in making the advance,\* streams and swampy places requiring to be bridged for the passage of the artillery. On nearing the iron foundry Birney was checked by the opening of a battery of the enemy at short range in position near Welford's house. Livingstone immediately replied, quickly silencing the rebel guns. The prospect of now completely severing the enemy's lines and rolling up his wings in detail seemed good. A turning movement upon Lee's left was entrusted to General Williams. He says, in his official report: "My division was ordered to make a detour to the left and front, move out two or three miles through the woods, so as to strike the enemy's rifle-pits, and other temporary works of the enemy, on the flank and rear, and then sweep both sides of the plank road toward Chancellorsville." This was a most admirably planned movement for crushing in the left flank of the wing remaining with General Lee. Connecting with Whipple on the right, and Whipple with Birney still further to the right, with the First and Third brigades, Knipe's and Ruger's, in advance,

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\* See motto of title page.

closely supported by Ross of the Second, the division swept forward, rapidly penetrating the dense evergreen thickets, its left amply protected by the well-fortified division of Geary. Knipe had already opened a brisk fire upon the enemy, driving them before him, and Birney in making a simultaneous advance had captured the Twenty-third Georgia regiment, and was making prisoners from Anderson's division, and Pleasanton, with three regiments of cavalry, who had been ordered up by General Hooker to join in the movement, was in readiness on the open ground above the run to charge, when the whole movement was arrested by a sudden disaster to the Eleventh corps.

When General Jackson, in his long flanking movement, had reached the Orange plank road, at three o'clock in the afternoon, he halted the head of his column to reconnoitre. Here he came up with the cavalry of Fitz Hugh Lee, which had been skirmishing along the Union front, and had ascertained the exact position occupied by the Union right.\* Fitz Lee was at this moment engaging the pickets, and Colquitt's brigade was placed in ambush along the road in hope of entrapping Howard's forces, which were reconnoitring in front and expected to advance.

At this point there is an eminence which commanded a full view of the whole Union position, and from this General Jackson intently examined every peculiarity of ground, and formation of troops. He decided, after careful consideration, not to make his attack here, but to pursue his flanking movement still further. He accordingly moved on until he had reached the Germania ford road, or turnpike leading to Orange Court-House, a little to the east of the Old Wilderness tavern. As the head of his column debouched into this road, it moved on it in the direction of Chancellorsville a half mile or more, until it reached the open ground at Luckett's, when he formed in three lines of battle nearly at right angles to the plank road, half of each line on either side of it, Rodes' division in front, Colston's next, and A. P. Hill's in rear, each line presenting a front of nearly two miles and about 200 yards apart, with skirmishers 400 yards in advance. As he had now brought his corps close in upon the Union lines it was necessary that extreme caution should

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\* Colquitt's and Rodes' reports.

be exercised so as not to excite attention. Directions were given that all orders should be delivered in a subdued tone, that loud talking be prohibited, and that no cheering be indulged in as the general moved along the lines. After getting into position the troops were allowed nearly two hours for rest and refreshment, having arrived upon the ground at half-past three to four\* o'clock.

Such was the position in which General Jackson's corps stood, at 6 o'clock, on the evening of the 2d, with every preparation made which skill and forethought could devise for a sudden and terrible onset. The flying artillery had kept pace with the head of the column and was placed in the front line ready to open. In what condition was the Union right for receiving such a blow? The Eleventh corps, in a line nearly a mile and a quarter in length, was resting parallel with, and in some parts, upon the road leading from Chancellorsville to Germania ford, and was, consequently, at right angles to the formation of Jackson, and ready to be stricken upon end. The extreme right of the corps was slightly refused. At the head of an open field, upon a road leading up from Hawkins' house, and terminating at the wood, was the Fifty-fourth New York in reserve. From a point somewhat in advance of this open field, extending in a line slightly curving outward through wood and partially cleared fields to the Germania road, was the One Hundred and Fifty-third Pennsylvania, a green regiment, which had never been in battle before, in formation more as a close line of skirmishers, than a regular line of battle, the men being ordered to stand three feet apart. Turning to the left in the direction of Chancellorsville, nearly at a right angle on striking the flank, there was posted upon the road two pieces of artillery, and in succession the Forty-fifth and Forty-first New York facing southward, with the Seventy-fifth Ohio in reserve on the north of the road. These constituted the brigade of General Von Gilsa, the first of the First division, General Devens commanding. Extending on towards the left were in succession the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-seventh Ohio, and the Fourteenth and Seventeenth Connecticut, and Diekmann's battery in line, and the Fifty-fifth Ohio in reserve, which formed the

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\* Rodes' and Doles' reports.



Second brigade, General McLean commanding. General Schurz's division, the Third, stood next, with the Seventy-fourth Pennsylvania, Sixty-first Ohio, and Sixty-third New York in line, and the One Hundred and Fifty-seventh New York and Eighty-second Illinois in reserve, which constituted General Schemmelfinnig's brigade, the First, and the One Hundred and Nineteenth New York, Seventy-fifth Pennsylvania, and Dilger's battery deployed, and the Eighty-second Ohio, Fifty-eighth New York, and Twenty-sixth Wisconsin in reserve, forming Colonel Kryzanouskig's brigade, the Second. Finally was the First brigade of General Von Steinwehr's division, the Second, commanded by General Buschbeck, having the Twenty-ninth New York and the Seventy-third and Seventy-fifth Pennsylvania and four guns of Weiderick's battery deployed, and the One Hundred and Fifty-fourth New York with the remaining artillery of the corps in reserve. A company of cavalry also operated upon this wing. General Barlow's brigade, as will be remembered, had been sent to the support of General Sickles at the furnace. Here, then, the extreme left of the division rested a little to the left of Dowdall's tavern, where General Howard had his headquarters. The line thus occupied was intrenched, the works facing southward along the Chancellorsville and Germania ford road, with skirmishers thrown out. It will be seen that the formation was to meet an attack coming from the south, and was in no condition to withstand a blow from the west, the One Hundred and Fifty-third Pennsylvania regiment being the only force in line facing west, and that drawn out in a thin formation, but recently recruited, and untried in battle.

When the order issued by General Hooker at half-past nine on the morning of the 2d, informing General Howard of the movement of the enemy to turn the right flank of the army, stating that his corps was all out of position to meet a foe from that direction, and requiring him to make the necessary changes of position to meet the enemy from the new direction in which they were now expected to come, General Schurz happened to be at the headquarters of General Howard. General Howard complained of being tired, and asked General Schurz, as being next him in command, to open

any dispatches that might come, while he went to lie down to take a little rest, directing that he should be awakened in case there were any of immediate importance. Shortly afterward a courier arrived, bringing General Hooker's dispatch, above recited. General Schurz immediately took it to General Howard and read it to him, and while the two were speaking about it, a second courier, or a young staff officer, arrived from General Hooker with a second dispatch of virtually the same purport. General Howard arose and the two officers went out upon the porch of the house, where they discussed the matter. General Schurz was of the opinion\* that General Devens' division, as well as his own, should be withdrawn from the positions they then occupied, and be formed on the open space on which they then were, and in the adjoining woods at right angles with the Chancellorsville road, so as to present a good front to the attack threatened by Jackson's movement, keeping a strong reserve well in hand. But General Howard insisted that his right flank was sufficiently protected by the two regiments of General Devens' division, which had been formed at right angles with his line of battle. He added that General Hooker had inspected the position of the Eleventh corps that morning, and found it good, referring to the ride of the general-in-chief along the line in company with General Sickles, not considering that when General Hooker made that inspection he knew nothing of the flank movement of Jackson, not having been apprised of that fact until he had completed the whole tour of inspection and returned to his headquarters. General Schurz, however, was so impressed with the importance of an entirely different formation to meet the altered prospect of attack, that he, on returning to his own division, on his own responsibility† withdrew all his regiments which stood in the second line from their position, and formed them on the open ground on the north of the plank road, with their front to the west.

During the afternoon great clouds of dust could be seen to the south of General Howard's front, betokening the movement of a heavy column to the west, which was reported to General Howard ;

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\* General Schurz's official report, p. 12, MS.

† Ibid., p. 13, MS.

but he returned the answer that the enemy was retreating. This idea of a retreat was distrusted by General Schemmelfinnig, who had reported the observation of the dust, and he was directed by General Schurz to make a reconnoissance to ascertain what was in front. One hundred picked men were detached for this purpose, and advanced south on a road intersecting the plank at right angles, under command of Captain Von Fitsh, aid to General Schemmelfinnig, and proceeded out a mile and a half, where the enemy was found in force and where the detachment was fired upon, but retired, and communicated the intelligence to corps headquarters. Not satisfied to remain inactive when the fate of the corps might be in danger, later in the afternoon General Schemmelfinnig was again ordered to make a reconnoissance. Putting the Seventy-fourth Pennsylvania regiment in motion it was moved out until it came upon the enemy in great force. This is doubtless the party referred to previously, which a brigade of the enemy was placed in ambush to entrap, when the head of Jackson's column had reached the Orange plank road. Major G. Schleiter, Adjutant-General to General Schemmelfinnig, was ordered by the latter to ride with all speed to General Howard's headquarters and inform him of the facts. "I nearly killed my horse," says Major Schleiter, "in riding to inform General Howard of the fact that the enemy was massing troops on our right flank, and was received with an incredulous smile, and directed to tell General Schemmelfinnig to stop reconnoitring, and remain in the position assigned to him. This was two hours before the attack was made."\*

The brigade of General Barlow was ordered away at about 4 P. M., and Generals Howard and Steinwehr both accompanied the brigade to its position on General Sickles' right. General Howard soon returned to his headquarters, and at 5 o'clock, in company with General Schurz, rode to the extreme right of the line, during which the precarious situation of the corps was earnestly discussed; but General Howard firmly adhered to his first opinion that it was unnecessary to change the position of the troops.† Major Frueauff, of the One Hundred and Fifty-third Pennsylvania, who was serv-

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\* "History of Pennsylvania Volunteers," Vol. II., p. 895.

† Reports of General Schurz, MSS.

ing on the staff of General Devens, states that two scouts from an Ohio regiment reported in his presence, an hour before the firing commenced, to General Howard, while riding along the line, and when to the right of General Devens' headquarters, that the rebels were massed, and had stacked arms in an open field fronting the Union lines, and were taking refreshments; that General Howard discredited the report, and said that the enemy were retreating. \* "About the middle of the afternoon," says General Devens, "a company of cavalry tried to go upon the road along which I was posted, and was forced back by the enemy. At about the same time two soldiers went out in front of our lines intending to represent themselves as deserters, if seized by the enemy. They came in and reported to me that the enemy were massing in good force upon the road. They were instantly sent to General Howard in charge of an aid. This was probably earlier rather than later than the middle of the afternoon."

General Schurz says, in his report: "Meanwhile we heard General Sickles' artillery, but the firing did not continue long, so that it seemed as if the attack on the flank and rear of that column of the enemy, which we had seen marching towards our left, had been checked or given up. It was between 3 and 4 P. M. when the section of artillery attached to General Von Gilsa's brigade gave two discharges, followed by a short musketry fire. We hastened to the front and received the report that only a few rebel cavalymen had shown themselves on the old turnpike, and that the artillery had fired without orders. All became quiet again. I ordered General Schemmelfinnig to push another reconnoissance up the plank road. The instructions he received from [corps] headquarters were to the effect that he should avoid everything that might bring on an engagement. The reconnoitring party returned after some time with the report that they had heard the yells and shouts of a large number of men behind the enemy's line of skirmishers."

It is thus clear, that, to the general officers of this corps, it was reported that the enemy in force were in position for a powerful attack. Whether the report was fully accredited is still in ques-

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\* "History of Pennsylvania Volunteers," Vol. IV., p. 774.

tion. It would appear from a clause in General Howard's report, that he, at least, was under the conviction that the enemy were retreating. "During Saturday, the 2d, the same General [Schemmelfunnig] made frequent reconnoissances. Infantry scouts and cavalry patrols were constantly pushed out on every road. The unvarying report was 'the enemy is crossing the plank road and moving towards Culpepper.'"



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CRISIS OF THE BATTLE.



At a quarter past five,\* on the evening of the 2d of May, having made every preparation, and ordered the commanders of brigades in the rear line to go to the assistance of the line in advance, when called upon, without waiting to refer the application to division commanders, General Jackson gave the word for his army to advance. The signal was communicated by the sound of the bugle,† and the moment the advance came upon the Union front a tremendous crash of musketry awakened the echoes of the forest, and two pieces of Stuart's horse artillery, which accompanied the first line, threw shells in rapid succession, completely enfilading the main line of battle of General Devens along the Germania road. The men were at rest sitting upon their knapsacks, their guns stacked, when the sudden crash of battle came. The first shell killed the major of a New York regiment and wounded several, and the rapid whirring of other shells alike destructive, aroused all to a sense of their peril. A volley was poured in from the weak advanced line in reply, and a rapid fire was continued. But the cannoniers of the two pieces of Devens' artillery on the road fled at the first discharge, and the regiments to left and right being out of position could make no defence and fled likewise, when, both wings having been turned,‡ the One Hundred and Fifty-third Pennsylvania was forced to give way and retired rapidly.

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\* Doles says 5.15 o'clock; Rodes 5.—"Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., pp. 279-300.

† "Reb. Rec.," Vol. VI., p. 590.

‡ Ibid.

General Doles was in the front line of Jackson's forces, and his brigade was so formed upon the right centre as to first strike the Union front. He says: \* "The brigade moved as rapidly as possible through a very thick wood, and skirmishers were immediately engaged by those of the enemy. Our forces, marching rapidly forward, assisted in driving in the enemy's sharpshooters, where we were subjected to a very heavy musketry fire, and grape, canister, and shell." Being somewhat checked by this fire, General Rodes called on Colonel Warren of the second line to come to his assistance, and both Jones and Warren pushed forward their brigades into the first line. It had been anticipated that some difficulty would be encountered at the open and commanding position at Tally's house. "Each brigade commander," † says General Rodes, "received positive instructions, which were well understood. The whole line was to push ahead, keeping the road for its guide. The position at Tally's house was to be carried at all hazards, as, from the best information that could be obtained, it commanded the second position of the enemy at Melzie Chancellor's house. After taking the heights at Tally's, if the enemy showed a determined front on the next ridge, my men were to be sheltered until our artillery could come up and dislodge them. Under no other circumstances was there to be any pause in the advance." But the advance of Jackson's troops was so sudden and unexpected, and the Union troops were so out of position, that it was impossible for them to change front and make any considerable stand on the commanding ground at Tally's. At a point near the Wilderness church is a little eminence, where Melzie Chancellor has since erected a house, on which the regiments faced to the west by General Schurz, took their stand, and made some resistance. This was another favorable position, and, had intrenchments been thrown up, a stout defense could have been made; but having scarcely any preparation for holding it, it had likewise to be speedily abandoned.

But the best position for checking Jackson's advance, on this whole field occupied by the Eleventh corps, was at Melzie Chancellor's, or Dowdall's tavern. Here was commanding ground, and

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\* "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 279.

† Ibid., p. 301.

a long stretch of cleared fields in front, over which Jackson was obliged to advance, would have given the Union troops an opportunity rarely presented on any field of battle, to have swept the enemy's advancing columns with both infantry and artillery, and carried swift destruction to his ranks. With good troops that position could never have been taken by direct advance. And here a fair stand was made. An irregular line of rifle pits had been thrown up, stretching out in a northerly direction across the fields, conforming to the irregularities of ground, facing to the west. Behind this Schemmelfinnig's brigade took position, and a few of the troops of Devens' division joined him. Buschbeck's brigade of Steinwehr's division, which had been posted on the south of the plank, by taking the opposite side of their intrenchments, could deliver an effective flank fire, as the enemy in dense masses came madly on.\* Dilger's battery was likewise brought into position for delivering a flanking fire. For the space of an hour† these troops, unheeding the wild race of a portion of the corps as it broke frantically over them in its flight to the rear, made a stubborn and most destructive fight. "It was," says General Schemmelfinnig, "the second line of your division, which changed front from south to west in less than two minutes time, and the brigade battery, commanded by Captain Dilger, on the left, which checked the heavy column of the enemy pouring into us from the front, and from both flanks. . . . Your two brigades, and that of General Buschbeck, together comprising not quite four thousand muskets, alone received the entire shock of the battle, and held the enemy in check for at least an hour." General Doles,‡ who was in the front line of Jackson's force, says: "We pursued his retreating forces about three hundred yards over an open field, receiving a very severe fire from musketry and a battery of four pieces on the crest of the hill, that commanded the field below; his infantry was in large force, and well protected by rifle pits and intrenchments."

It was in carrying this position that Colston's division, which formed Jackson's second line, was brought up throughout its entire

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\* General Howard's official report, MS.

† "Reb. Rec.," Vol. VI., p. 589.

‡ "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 279.



length to the support of the first, and the two divisions henceforward went on as one. Presenting thus a vastly outnumbering force, and outflanking the Union front by a long sweep on either flank, it was not in the power of men, however resolute, long to stand up against it. But the soldiers of Buschbeck and Schemmelfinnig, though pushed by overwhelming battle-lines from their position, were in no haste to retire, and withdrew with their faces to the foe. \* "The attack of the enemy," says General Steinwehr, "was very powerful. They emerged in close columns from the woods, and had thrown the first and second divisions, who retired toward Chancellorsville, in great confusion. Colonel Buschbeck succeeded to check the progress of the enemy, and I directed him to hold his position as long as possible. The men fought with great determination and courage. Soon, however, the enemy gained both wings of the brigade, and the enfilading fire which was now opened upon his small force, and which killed and wounded nearly one-third of its whole strength, soon forced them to retire. Colonel Buschbeck then withdrew his small brigade in perfect order toward the woods, the enemy closely pressing on. Twice he halted, fired a round, and at last reached the rear of General Sickles' corps, which had been drawn up in position near Chancellorsville. Here he formed his regiment in close column, and you will recollect offered to advance again to a bayonet charge." General Howard, who had exerted himself from the opening of the attack to stay his broken and panic-stricken troops, calling upon them not to disgrace him by their flight, could effect little, and General Devens, who was wounded early in the battle, was carried to the rear.

When, therefore, the fight made by Union troops at Melzie Chancellor's was overcome, there was little of the Eleventh corps left to stay the onward progress of a triumphant and exultant enemy, who from the start had fought with unexampled impetuosity, and had rushed on with those unearthly yells peculiar to the army of Northern Virginia, which, having been once heard, were never to be forgotten. From this point the Eleventh corps disappeared, and for all the practical purposes of staying the onward course of the victorious foe was, as the flame of a candle, extinguished. The es-

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\* Report of General Steinwehr, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. VI., page 579.

sential form of the Union line before the attack of Jackson was that of a right-angled triangle. By the dispersion of the Eleventh corps, one of the legs of that triangle was taken away, and only a straight line was left. On the proper front of that line Lee was pressing, and from the opposite direction on the rear Jackson was moving in apparently irresistible columns in the full tide of success. Lee had given explicit orders for the troops under his immediate command to press forward and make a vigorous attack along his whole line, the moment they heard the guns of Jackson. This was promptly done, and as Jackson rolled up the Eleventh corps, and came dashing on with shoutings of success upon the rear, the Union line was being pressed on both sides and in peril of being crushed, as between the upper and nether mill-stone. What can save it in its dire necessity? To the mind of a skilled soldier, necessities are opportunities. The great calamity opens the way for the happy use of the resources at hand. The great captain never loses the equipoise of his faculties, but wheels squadron and guns into position, strikes where the foe least expects it, and lights up the field with the flame of his own genius. It is in the moment of peril that he feels his strength and rejoices in the putting forth of his power.

General Hooker had retained near his headquarters, as his only reserve, Berry's division of the Third corps—his own old division—the legion that had followed him in many a desperate conflict, and before whose intrepid valor the stoutest had been made to quail and bite the dust. General Hooker was, at the time that Jackson opened his attack, absorbed with the operations of Sickles upon the flank of Lee, and had just sent forward strong columns in support of the movement. But no sooner had it become known to him that an attack was being made upon his right flank, and that the Eleventh corps was giving way, than he called on this division to move into the breach. Unfortunately, one brigade, that of Mott, was wanting, having been left to guard the United States ford, but with the two present a line was formed perpendicular to the plank road, which steadily, notwithstanding the trains and fugitives of the Eleventh corps in wild disorder were breaking over it, advanced through the almost impenetrable forest to the crest of the hill beyond Fairview,

where a breast-work of logs was quickly thrown up, and its bayonets formed a wall of steel. His artillery reserve was near at hand, and, marshaling it in position upon the brow of the gentle eminence at Fairview, he, in a short time, had thirty-eight guns\* in line bearing upon the approaches from the west, and ready to open upon the enemy.

But the fugitives of the broken Eleventh corps did not follow exclusively the plank road towards Chancellorsville, but took to the right, pursuing the line of works leading diagonally away from it, towards the cleared ground at Hazel grove. What was the condition of the Union line here? When the movement upon the rear of Jackson's flanking column at the furnace led by Birney, and upon Lee's left flank led by Williams, was in full tide, as previously described, and ready to fall with crushing power, "an aid of General Howard," says General Sickles, "(I presume †he was an aid, though he did not so announce himself), came to me and reported to me to be careful of my rear—that Stuart's cavalry was moving in my rear, and if I was not careful would cut me off; and, he added, that a strong column of Jackson's infantry was also very near me, and that our troops were retreating. I felt very indignant at this communication; I utterly disbelieved it, for I felt assured that no such thing could have occurred without a serious engagement with General Howard's force, and of course I would have heard the musketry and the noise of battle. This officer left, having given his information; or, as I thought at the time, having failed in an absurd effort to stampede me. In a minute or two another messenger, an officer who announced himself as an aid to General Howard, and who seemed to be much more self-possessed and methodical in his communication, arrived and said that he came to me by General Howard's orders, begging me to send him a regiment of General Pleasanton's cavalry—that his corps had given

\* Dimmick's, H, First U. S., six twelve-pounders; Crosby's, F, Fourth U. S., four twelve-pounders; Winegar's, M, First New York, six ten-pounders; Fitzhugh's, K, First New York, four three-inch; Thomas', C, Fourth U. S., four twelve-pounders; Winslow's, D, First New York, six twelve-pounders; Hill's, C, First Virginia, two three-inch; Dilger's, G, First Ohio, six twelve-pounders, relieved on the morning of the 3d by Hampton's Third Pennsylvania six ten-pound parrotts.

† Testimony of General Sickles, Report on "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., 5.

way, and that our right flank had been carried by the enemy, and that Jackson was in my rear."

At the moment when Sickles received this startling intelligence he was on the point of ordering Pleasanton, with two regiments of cavalry, the Eighth and Seventeenth Pa., and Martin's battery of horse artillery, to move forward to the furnace, and charge upon the enemy. But, being now satisfied that calamity had fallen upon Howard, he recognized the necessity of instantly preparing to meet it. Thus far his attacking column had been entirely successful, having captured eight or nine hundred prisoners, and the enemy in his front fast giving way. But with Jackson in the position which he had attained at the moment when Howard's messengers reached him, Sickles' force could not have been in a more critical situation, either for its own safety, or for rendering assistance to the rest of the army. He immediately sent orders to Birney and Whipple to withdraw as rapidly as possible, and himself rode back towards the position he had recently left. He had not far to go before he was convinced by ocular demonstration of the truth of the messages from General Howard. The enemy themselves were visible, and the fugitives of the Eleventh corps came rushing on over the hill, and literally stampeded his artillery, which he had left near his intrenchments at Hazel grove.

Upon the open ground at this point, which was slightly elevated, a considerable force of artillery, and the two regiments of cavalry named above, were halted. The moment Pleasanton received the call from Howard for cavalry to check the confusion in his corps, he determined to act at once, and called on Major Keenan, of the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry, a resolute and daring officer, to lead his command to the assistance of Howard upon the plank road, and, as the movement resulted, made one of the most daring and heroic charges recorded in the annals of war.

That a veritable account may be given of the important dispositions made at this point for checking the victorious columns of Jackson, and arresting the progress of the disaster which had befallen Howard's troops, I quote the language of General Sickles' official report, and a brief passage from the report of General Hunt, as corroborative of the language of Sickles. General Sickles' report

is dated on the 20th of May, 1863, only a few days subsequent to the battle, and contains a very full and complete account of the operations of his corps.

"I had only time," he says, "to despatch my staff officers to recall Birney and Whipple, when the enemy's scouts and some dragoons disclosed themselves, as I rode towards the bridge, across Scott's run, for the purpose of making dispositions to meet and arrest the disaster. Meeting General Pleasanton, we hastened to make the best available dispositions to attack Jackson's column on its right flank. I confided to Pleasanton the direction of the artillery—three batteries of my reserve, Clark's, Lewis' and Turnbull's, and his own [Martin's] horse battery. . . . Time was everything. The fugitives from the Eleventh corps swarmed from the woods, and swept frantically over the cleared fields in which my artillery was parked, the exulting enemy at their heels mingled yells with their volleys, and in the confusion which followed it seemed as if cannon and caissons, dragoons, cannoniers, and infantry, could never be disentangled from the mass in which they were suddenly thrown. Fortunately, there was only one obvious outlet for these panic-stricken hordes—after rushing between and over our guns—and this was through a ravine crossed in two or three places by the head waters of Scott's run. This was soon made impassable by the reckless crowd choking up the way.

"A few minutes was enough to restore comparative order, and get our artillery in position. The enemy showing themselves on the plain, Pleasanton met the shock at short range, with the well-directed fire of twenty-two pieces, double shot with canister. The rebels pressed up the plank road rapidly, and, as General Pleasanton justly observes in his report herewith transmitted, 'they advanced in silence, and with that skill and adroitness which they often display to gain their object.' The only color visible was an American flag with the centre battalion. To clear up this doubt my aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Thompson, First New York cavalry, rode to within a hundred yards of them, when they called out to him, 'We are friends,' 'Come on,' and he was thus induced to go fifty yards closer, when the whole line, in a most dastardly manner, opened on him with musketry, dropped the American color,

and displayed eight or ten battle-flags. Lieutenant Thompson escaped unhurt, and our batteries opened on the advancing columns with crushing power. The heads of the columns were swept away to the woods, from which they opened a furious, but ineffectual, fire of musketry. Twice they attempted a flank movement, but the first was checked by our guns, and the second, and most formidable, was baffled by the advance of Whipple and Birney, who were coming up rapidly, but in perfect order, and forming in lines of brigades in rear of the artillery and on the flanks."

To this graphic account of these vitally important operations, prepared at the time by General Sickles, the following from the official report of General Hunt, chief of artillery, army of the Potomac, dated August 1st, 1863, corroborates the statements of Sickles and Pleasanton.

"When the Eleventh corps was broken up and routed on the 2d, its batteries are reported as having behaved well. General Pleasanton collected some batteries belonging to different corps, and with them formed a large battery of twenty-four guns.\* The retreating troops swept through and around this battery, carrying off horses and caissons and even overturning one of the guns, but as a whole it held firm, and when the enemy, flushed with success, appeared before it, met them with a storm of canister, first checking, and then driving them back into the woods from which they emerged at 300 yards distance. It was a desperate combat between artillery and infantry, in which the artillery repulsed the infantry, flushed as they were with a great success which they were following up when checked by this battery."

In the meantime the divisions of Birney and Whipple, having retraced their steps, had come up just in time to check† a determined advance of the enemy upon these guns of Pleasanton, in which they sought to flank and capture them. But the ‡infantry support made this position at Hazel grove secure, though the guns and

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\* Martin's horse artillery, Sixth N. Y., six three-inch guns; Clark's, B, First N. Y., six ten-pounders; Lewis' Tenth N. Y., six light twelve-pounders; Turnbull's, F and K, Third U. S., six twelve-pounders.—Hunt's MS. report.

† Report of General Hunt, chief of artillery, MS.

‡ General Sickles' report, MS.

troops were now facing precisely in the opposite direction from that in which they were in the morning, and on the reverse side of their breastworks. So strong did Sickles feel here that he courted attack, and as twilight began to deepen, his troops uttered cheer upon cheer in a vain endeavor to challenge the foe to renew the combat.

The two foremost lines of the enemy, which, as we have seen, after crossing the works at Melzie Chancellor's, had become intermingled and united as one, were so badly disorganized by this advance on Pleasanton and Sickles, and still farther to their left by the advance in the thick forest, that it became necessary for them to reorganize and reform the disjointed column. General Rodes, who commanded the first line, accordingly sent to General Jackson notice of their condition, and "urged him to push forward the fresh troops of the reserve line to take the place of his."\* "There being no other place," says General Colston, who commanded the second line, "but the open ground at Melzie Chancellor's suitable for such a purpose [reforming], I withdrew all my troops, except Colquitt's brigade, then on guard, to reform them at that point." Colston, who now took the second line as in the morning, reformed his troops, "which had become very much confused, the different regiments, brigades and divisions mixed up together," near the log hospital which had been used for the Union wounded, and Rodes formed his just in rear of Colston, on the line of Howard's works, at Melzie Chancellor's. Accordingly A. P. Hill's division, which at starting had been the third, pushed up to the front, and cautiously advanced through the darkness of the night, which was heightened by the sombre shadows of the forest. General Jackson was at the front with Hill's troops, and was very eager to make an immediate advance, judging that there was nothing more to be feared from the Eleventh corps, and hoping to find that the panic created in that might have extended to the other corps. His immediate object was to get possession of United States ford, and thus cut off all way of retreat for the Union army. But the density of the wood, and the darkness which was already settling down upon the field, made him cautious about ordering an advance, until he knew more definitely

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\* Report of General Rodes, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 301.

what was in his front. Accordingly, while Hill's division was forming and advancing to the position which had been vacated by the divisions of Rodes and Colston, Jackson determined to ride forward with his staff and a small escort, and ascertain what really was in his front, so that he might regulate his operations intelligently, but apparently with the full intent of pushing his advantage immediately. The shock produced by the charge of Pleasanton's regiment of cavalry led by Keenan, which had gone to its destruction that it might for the moment check the wave that was rolling with such resistless might, had undoubtedly created some nervousness in the rebel lines, and they were ready to fire on anything seen approaching them from the direction whence the Union forces might be expected to come.

As we have already observed, the reserve artillery of the Union army, nearly forty pieces, had been brought into position at Fairview, pointing westward, and upon an elevation so that by using solid shot it could fire over the heads of the infantry, in line five hundred yards farther to the front. A section of Dimmick's battery had also been thrown forward to a point on the plank, near the line of the infantry. Such was the position of the Union troops when General Jackson rode out in front of his own line to reconnoitre. In his immediate rear was the brigade of General Lane, of Hill's division, which was just then coming into position, his skirmishers already advanced. They had been ordered to fire upon any force seen advancing. Jackson was upon the rebel left of the plank road, but a rod or two away from it, in a lane or cart-path leading into the forest, and had advanced far enough to discover Berry's skirmishers, and draw their fire, when, turning to ride back to his own lines, his own troops mistaking the cavalcade approaching for Union cavalry, fired a volley into it. \* "The skirmishers on both sides," as is reported by his staff, "were firing, and as Jackson approached his lines, he, with his escort, was mistaken for Federal cavalry, and received a volley from the Confederate line of battle. Several of the party fell killed and wounded. The general turned to his left, and, entering the thicket, continued

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\* "The Battle-Fields of Virginia," by Hotchkiss and Allan, of the staff of General Jackson, p. 53.









*T. J. Jackson*

"STONEWALL" JACKSON.



to go on toward his troops. A moment more, and his party, still mistaken for Federal cavalry, were fired into by a brigade on the south of the road, and at a distance of not more than thirty or forty yards. Jackson received three balls, one in the right hand, and two in the left arm, one of which shattered the bone two inches below the shoulder, and severed the artery. Half his escort, including Captain Boswell, of his staff, were killed and wounded. His horse, frightened by the fire, and now without guidance, turned and rushed towards the Federal lines. As he was thus carried through the brushwood, he was struck by the overhanging limbs, and at one time nearly unhorsed by a bough, which bore him backward and tore off his cap. Recovering himself, he managed to check his horse with his bleeding hand, and to turn it into the plank road. Here Captain Wilbourn, of his staff, seized the bridle and quieted the frightened animal. The general now attempted to move his broken arm, to ascertain the extent of the injury. This caused so much pain that he fell exhausted and bleeding into the arms of Captain Wilbourn, and was borne to the roadside and laid under a tree. Captain Wilbourn despatched his only companion at the moment for a surgeon, while he attempted to locate the wound and stanch the blood. While thus engaged, General Hill rode up with his staff, and, hearing of the misfortune, threw himself from his horse, and hurried to the side of the wounded leader. Seeing the rapid flow of blood, he bandaged the arm above the wound. Though so much exhausted by pain and loss of blood, no time was to be lost in removing Jackson. . . Having been raised from the ground, he was supported for a few steps by Captain Leigh, and then was placed upon a litter. He had been carried but a little way in this manner when the Federal artillery opened, and a perfect storm of canister swept down the road. The general's horse, which was being led, broke away and dashed into the Confederate lines. The road was cleared in a few moments of everything, except the party bearing the wounded chieftain. In another moment one of the litter-bearers was struck dead, and Captain Leigh caught the falling litter. They were compelled to set it down. The general attempted to rise, but was made by Lieutenant Smith, his aid, to lie down. The whole party lay flat on the ground for several

minutes, while the canister tore over and past them. The direction of the Federal fire changed in part to the left. The general was assisted to rise, and leaning on his aids, Lieutenants Smith and Morrison, turned slowly into the woods on the right of the road. Here they soon came upon the Confederate line of battle, occupied at this point by Pender's brigade of A. P. Hill's division. Jackson had instructed his attendants from the first to conceal his fall from the soldiers. As they passed through and over the troops, who were for the most part lying down to avoid the terrible artillery fire, to the numerous inquiries of 'Whom have you there?' the answer was returned, 'A Confederate officer.' General Pender, however, who met the party at this moment, recognized Jackson, and, after expressing the deep concern at the misfortunes, said, 'The troops have suffered by the enemy's artillery, and are somewhat disordered. I fear we cannot maintain our position here!' The exhausted and fainting soldier for a moment recovered his former fire, as raising his head, he replied in his usual quick, decided tone, 'You must hold your ground, General Pender; you must hold your ground, sir!' A little after he asked to be allowed to sit down and rest. The firing still being too heavy to admit of this with safety, he was again placed upon the litter, and carried forward as rapidly as the dense, tangled brush would admit. One of the bearers stumbled and fell, and this time the general was thrown from the litter upon his wounded arm. For the first time a groan escaped him. Again he was placed upon the litter; the party turned from the wood into the road, and carried him some distance to the rear, until they came up with an ambulance. Here Dr. McGuire met them, and having readjusted the bandage, so as to more completely stop the flow of blood, placed him in the ambulance, which already contained Colonel Crutchfield, and accompanied them to the hospital at Wilderness Tavern."

Jackson had received his mortal hurt; he had given his last order, he had fought his last battle. He lingered for a week and then passed quietly away. When the next sad conflict came for his companions in arms, he was beyond the reach of mortal harm, where the clash of charging squadrons and the dread clangor of battle never come.

But the calamities to Jackson's corps did not cease with the fall of its leader. That fire of artillery under which Jackson was carried to the rear not only produced consternation in the rebel lines, and caused great slaughter, but General A. P. Hill, who was next in command, and upon whom the entire responsibility of the management of the battle devolved, received a serious wound which incapacitated him for further duty. The command then devolved upon General Rodes, the next in rank, who decided to bring his army into position for attack, but to withhold the blow until morning. In the meantime, Major Pendleton, of Jackson's staff, had been instructed to send for General Stuart of the cavalry to take the command. General Rodes says: \* "I yielded the command to General Stuart, not because I thought him entitled to it, belonging as he does to a different arm of the service—nor because I was unwilling to assume the responsibility of carrying on the attack, as I had already made the necessary arrangements, and they remained unchanged, but because, from the manner in which I had been informed that he (Stuart) had been sent for, I inferred that General Jackson or General Hill had instructed Major Pendleton to place him in command."

But General Stuart was not at hand to assume the management of the battle. He had been with Jackson's column when the attack was made upon the Eleventh corps, and remained with it until dark, when, seeing no further opportunity for the use of his cavalry, he proposed to General Jackson to lead it back to Ely's ford, to defend the passage of the river against Averell, who had arrived on the opposite bank and was threatening to cross. The proposition was approved by General Jackson, and Stuart was ordered to act upon the suggestion. He had hardly reached the ford, and was giving orders for the posting of his command, when Major Pendleton, of General Hill's staff, came post haste to inform him of the misfortunes which had befallen both Generals Jackson and Hill, and to request him to hasten to the front and take command of Jackson's corps. Stuart was five miles away. But immediately turning over his cavalry to another he rode rapidly to the front, where he arrived at 10 o'clock. General Stuart says, in his report,

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\* "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 302.

that he had determined to press the pursuit that night; but, finding on his arrival that the Union troops were reformed and disposed to contest the ground, he decided to postpone further operations until morning, and in the meantime prepare for a vigorous attack.

General Slocum, of the Twelfth corps, had no sooner discovered that an attack was being made upon Howard, than he ordered General Williams, who had just then reached his position on the left of Sickles at the furnace, and was about to strike General Lee's left, to cease operations in that direction, and return immediately to his position on the Chancellorsville line. At double-quick, but in good order, the brigades fell back, only to find the whole ground, which they had left, filled with the fugitives of the Eleventh corps, and the *debris* of the retreat. General Williams rode on in advance, and, with Lieutenant-Colonel Dickenson, of General Hooker's staff, endeavored to stop and reform the disorganized mass; but with little success. Ruger's and Knipe's brigades moved by the flank along the entire line of woods south of the plank, and, having faced to the front, with a loud cheer advanced into the woods to regain their breastworks. By this movement the progress of the rebel line was immediately checked. Ross' brigade, which was upon the left and connected with the right of Geary's division, was able to regain its position behind the works it had vacated. Ruger's brigade, which stood next, was able to regain a portion of its barricades. A marsh farther to the right interfered with a continuous movement, and part of a regiment, which had to be detached to avoid the marsh, was captured by the enemy, who had got possession of their works further to the right. Finding it impracticable to regain this part of his intrenchments Williams took up a new line along the interior edge of the woods, in front of the ravine near Fairview, and connecting on the plank road with the left of General Berry, who now removed the part of his division south of the plank, to the north of it. At 9 o'clock General William Hays' brigade, of Couch's corps, was sent to take position on the right of Berry. By this formation the right wing of General Hooker's army, though considerably contracted, was again whole, and ready for the enemy's advance should he choose to make it during the night. Sickles' artillery, which Pleasanton had used with



so good effect in checking the enemy at night-fall, was in commanding position and had already silenced the enemy's guns, posted in the open ground about Melzie Chancellor's. The powerful batteries at Fairview were able to reach the greater part of the front looking west, and the infantry line was well posted and ready to repel any attack which the enemy might choose to deliver. There was a line of works reaching out diagonally from Williams' left towards Melzie Chancellor's, which a division of Sickles had occupied in the morning before advancing to the furnace, which the enemy now held, where some of Whipple's ammunition train, caissons, and two or three guns, had, in the absence of this division, fallen into the enemy's hands. To regain these works and material General Sickles sought permission of the general-in-chief to make a night attack. This was granted and the order given to make it. Accordingly at midnight Birney led two of his brigades, Ward's and Hayman's, to the attack. It was made entirely with the bayonet, with uncapped muskets, and was gallantly executed. The works and material were retaken in face of a terrific infantry fire, and a flank sweep of artillery fire planted near Melzie Chancellor's. The encounter was not confined to Birney's forces, but was taken up along the whole rebel front, reaching around to his extreme left. This fire disclosed the position and extent of the enemy's line, upon which the Union artillery at Fairview at once opened with terrible effect, and the infantry on the right of the line, where it would not compromise the movement of Birney, joined. War presents few spectacles of such awful grandeur as this. It lasted for an hour, in which the forest resounded with the crash of musketry and the deep roar of artillery, and the whole heavens were lighted up with sulphurous flame. Finally, the noise of battle died away, and the weary soldier slept on his arms. An hour had scarcely passed when it broke forth afresh, as some position of the rebel line was changed, or an attempt made to regain lost ground, and the sound of the conflict was even more terrible than before. But it sooner ceased, and the rest of the night was passed in quiet.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A MORNING OF BLOODY CONFLICT.



THE almost simultaneous fall of both Jackson and Hill, the two officers highest in rank in Jackson's corps, late at night, necessitated the assumption of command by General Stuart, with no knowledge whatever of the condition of his army, or what were the plans of his predecessors for continuing the battle. Supposing that General Jackson had definite designs, and not wishing to interpose his own, which would of necessity have to be *impromptu* and formed upon imperfect information, he sent Major Pendleton to confer with him and receive his instructions. It was half-past three on the morning of the 3d when the major arrived at the hospital at the Wilderness Tavern, where the wounded chieftain was lying. So critical was his condition considered to be, that the surgeons refused to allow him to be disturbed. But on representing the urgency of the case, the major was finally admitted. \* "When he entered the tent, the general said, 'Well, Major, I am glad to see you; I thought you were killed.' Pendleton briefly explained the condition of affairs, gave Stuart's message, and asked what should be done. General Jackson was at once interested, and asked in his quick, rapid way several questions. When they were answered he remained silent for a moment, evidently trying to think. He contracted his brow, set his mouth, and for some moments was obviously endeavoring to concentrate his thoughts. For a moment it was believed he had succeeded, for his nostril dilated, and his eye

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\* Hotchkiss—Allan, p. 121.

flashed its old fire, but it was only for a moment. His face relaxed again; presently he answered very feebly and sadly, 'I don't know; I can't tell; say to General Stuart he must do what he thinks best.' "

Being left to his own resources, General Stuart spent the night in examining the positions of his troops, and preparing to renew the battle at early dawn. No communication had yet been had with General Lee, who remained with the troops on the right; but during the night Stuart sent a courier to him, asking him to extend his line upon the left, and he would extend his own upon the right, and endeavor to join hands. He found upon the front line Hill's division, now commanded by General Heth, somewhat broken and confused upon the right, where Sickles confronted its flank. Upon the right of the plank road, with its left abutting upon it, was Lane's brigade, occupying the reverse side of the breastworks from which Williams' division, of Slocum's corps, had been withdrawn in the afternoon of the 2d. Pender's brigade was upon the left of the plank in line with Lane, also behind abandoned works. Upon the right of Lane were in succession the brigades of McGowan and Archer, and on the extreme left joining Pender was posted the brigade of Thomas, while Heth's own brigade, now led by Colonel Breckenbough, was held in reserve. The night attack of Sickles had caused the drawing back of the right of this division, so that while the left faced Chancellorsville, the right looked towards Hazel grove. In the second line was Colston's division, with the brigades of J. V. Williams (Colston's) and Jones on the right of the plank, and those of Paxton and G. M. Williams' (Nichol's) on the left of the road. In the third line, a little in advance of Melzie Chancellor's, was the division of Rodes, which had borne the brunt of the battle on the preceding evening, with the brigades of O'Neal (Rodes) and Iverson on the left of the plank, and those of Ramseur, Dole and Colquitt on the right. The latter was subsequently detached and sent to the extreme left. In addition to these dispositions of the infantry, Colonel E. P. Alexander, \* senior officer of artillery in the corps, was directed to occupy with his guns every available position along the whole line, in which duty he was engaged the whole night.

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\* General Stuart's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 260.

At the Union headquarters the night of the 2d was spent in devising new combinations for meeting the changed aspect of affairs brought about by the sudden yielding and disappearance of the Eleventh corps. While the battle of Saturday evening was still raging at about the hour of nine, General Hooker dispatched an order to General Sedgwick, by an aide-de-camp, in the following words: \* "The major-general commanding directs that you cross the Rappahannock, at Fredericksburg, on receipt of this order, and at once take up your line of march on the Chancellorsville road until you connect with him, and will attack and destroy any force you may fall in with on the road. You will leave all your trains behind except pack trains of your ammunition, and march to be in the vicinity of the general at daylight. You will probably fall upon the rear of the forces commanded by General Lee, and, between you and the major-general commanding, he expects to use him up. Send word to General Gibbon to take possession of Fredericksburg. Be sure not to fail."

This order was delivered to General Sedgwick at 11 P. M., two hours from the time it was issued, and it found him across the river at Franklin's bridge, instead of on the north bank, as General Hooker supposed he was at the time of penning the order. He had previously informed General Sedgwick that there was only Early's division left in the works at Fredericksburg on his front, and hence that he would not be necessarily long delayed by it in getting in motion. That the force in his front was insignificant was corroborated by the facts that, from several points, columns and trains had been observed moving on the morning of the 1st towards Chancellorsville, and that points on the Fredericksburg heights and along the rebel entrenched line seemed to be feebly held, all of which had been faithfully reported to General Sedgwick, so that he could have no doubt that the main body of the enemy had gone. At midnight General Butterfield sent the following to General Sedgwick: "From the statements brought by General Hooker's aid, it seems to be of vital importance that you should fall upon Lee's rear with crushing force. He will explain all to you. Give your advance to one who will do all that the urgency of the case requires." To

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 129.

General Gibbon, commanding a division of the Second corps, General Butterfield sent the following: "Your command must cross the river to Fredericksburg to-night. Pontoon bridge now at Lacy house. Get under way soon. General Sedgwick is ordered to move through Fredericksburg towards Chancellorsville. Look out you do not come in contact with him. You must see to the laying the bridges." Lest these several orders and communications should not sufficiently impress the commander of this corps with the urgency of the case and the need of celerity of movement, General Hooker sent General Warren, his engineer-in-chief, who was familiar with the topography of the country and the roads on which the advance was to be made, and likewise the exact position of General Hooker's troops at Chancellorsville, and was consequently well able to judge how they could be best approached and a junction of the two wings of the army formed, to urge a rapid forward movement. "I pointed out to General Warren," says General Hooker, "on the map where I wanted the Sixth corps to go, and told him what time I desired it to be there; I also impressed upon him the necessity of a prompt compliance with my orders on the part of General Sedgwick."

\*Mott's brigade of the Third corps, which had been left at United States ford, was ordered up to Chancellorsville during the night, and arrived at 2 o'clock on the morning of the 3d, when it was posted in rear of the right of General Williams' division, with its right resting on the plank road, just in front of the artillery on the Fairview heights. The position of General Hooker's forces, facing Jackson's corps, when fighting ceased at 2 o'clock on the morning of the 3d, was as follows: On the extreme left reaching around towards Dowdall's tavern and facing substantially northward were Birney's and Whipple's divisions of the Third corps intrenched, with guns advantageously posted. Connecting with Sickles' right was Williams' division of the Twelfth corps, forming nearly a right angle at the point of junction, and stretching onward to the plank road on which its right abutted facing westward, and 500 yards in front of the artillery at Fairview. On the right of the plank in continuation of Williams' line was Berry's division of the Third

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\* Sickles' official report, MS.

corps, and upon its right. General William Hays' brigade of the Second corps. In rear of Williams, as we have just noticed, was the brigade of Mott, and in rear of all, upon the edge of the open ground about Fairview, were thirty-eight pieces of artillery, which during the night had been intrenched. The First corps, under General Reynolds, which had begun to come up during the evening of the 2d, took position on a line overlooking Hunting run, nearly at right angles with the line of Williams and Berry, but did not quite connect with it. It will thus be seen that if only Jackson's corps was to be met, Hooker's dispositions could not have been better for routing and overwhelming the entire body. Hooker was virtually on the three sides of a square, the left leg shorter than the right, and the ground favorable for meeting an attack, the position about Hazel grove being especially advantageous for artillery, and had raking range of the rebel right flank. The ground where Williams stood was seamed by little ravines worn by the tributaries of Lewis' creek, which gave good lines of defense.

But the battling with Jackson's corps was only a part of the problem presented. Lee, with nearly half of the rebel force, unbroken, and fresh for the conflict, was at hand and might at any moment move upon this part of the field. While Sickles was in admirable position for doing execution upon the troops confronting him of Jackson's corps; yet he knew not at what moment the forces of Lee would strike him in rear, when he would have been between two fires and liable to capture. The morning hours were not very far advanced before Anderson's division of Longstreet's corps did swing round, and, coming upon the rear of this very position of Sickles, connected with the right of Jackson.

General Hooker plainly saw the great danger to which Sickles was here exposed, and, although it was with extreme reluctance that he yielded the commanding ground about Hazel grove, admirable as it was for the artillery, yet he deemed it too hazardous to expose his troops thereon, and consequently decided to draw in the imperilled parts and establish a new line of battle considerably more contracted, covering the open ground about Fairview and Chancellorsville. He accordingly ordered Sickles to withdraw at daylight, and moving up the little ravine formed by the tributary of Lewis

creek, which runs in front of Fairview, and take position in the intrenchments along the new line. General Hooker would have ordered the movement at an earlier hour; but there had been so much noisy fighting during the night, and the troops manifested so much nervousness, that he feared, if the transfer was made in the darkness, it might be attended with peril.

Whipple commenced the movement, preceded by the artillery of both divisions, except Huntington's battery, which was in admirable position for covering the withdrawal, and was closely followed by Birney. All had passed out in good order and without conflict, until Graham's brigade, which brought up the rear of the column, was about to march, when the enemy struck him with terrific violence, and charged on Huntington's battery. And now was seen the magic virtue of a cool head, and the prompt obedience of men who had perfect confidence in their leader. Graham gave the word, "About face and give those people a volley." But one volley did not satisfy the resolute men of Graham, and they poured in round after round until the enemy was willing to keep at a respectful distance. Huntington's battery, too, in its commanding position, swept the plain on which the enemy deployed for this attack, and assisted to quell the ardor of the rebel onset. Graham then withdrew in good order; but the battery in crossing Scott's run lost some of its horses and material.

General Stuart, in his report, explains how this attack upon Graham, which opened the battle of Chancellorsville, came to be made, without having intended it.\* "At early dawn," he says, "Trimble's division (Colston's) composed the second line, and Rodes' division the third. The latter had his rations on the spot, and, as his men were entirely without food, was extremely anxious to issue. I was disposed to wait a short time for this purpose; but when, as preliminary to an attack, I ordered the right of the first line to swing around, and come perpendicular to the road, the order was misunderstood for an order to attack, and that part of the line became engaged. I ordered the whole line to advance, and the second and third lines to follow." It will be remembered that the evening fight made by Sickles, from the position he had

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\* General Stuart's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 260.

just abandoned, and the midnight charge made by Birney, was upon the rebel right flank which caused the front line of that flank to be refused. It was the attempt to rectify this irregularity, preparatory to opening the battle, which brought on the attack upon Graham.

But this shortening of lines, and taking up a more contracted position about Chancellorsville was only preliminary to, and a step towards other dispositions which General Hooker had decided on. Should General Sedgwick come up, as there was reason to expect, and attack Lee in rear, Hooker would hold on to his position about Chancellorsville and co-operate with him. But should Sedgwick fail to come, Hooker had determined to take up still another line of battle, from a half to three-quarters of a mile in rear of the first, and to this end his engineers had during the night examined the ground and traced its location. Commencing at Scott's dam on the Rappahannock, it followed the general direction of the Mineral Spring road, already occupied by the Fifth corps, around to White House on the Ely's and United States Ford road, where, turning to the right, nearly at right angles, it followed very closely the course of Hunting run down to its confluence with the Rapidan. This was a very strong position, and had the great advantage of having both wings protected by a deep and rapid river. The First corps, as it began to arrive early in the night of the 2d, went into position on the right of this new line, facing Hunting creek, Wadsworth's division on the extreme right, Robinson's next, and Doubleday's reaching up nearly to the centre, Sykes' division of the Fifth corps alone interposing on the right centre. The Eleventh corps, as it was reformed, was sent during the night to relieve the Fifth corps on the Mineral Spring road, which was brought up upon the centre.

General Hooker was led to the adoption of this new line by the false position into which he was thrown by the giving way of the Eleventh corps, and the utter loss of the vital points of the ground that he had selected on which to fight the battle. The plateau at Talley's, where the extreme right of his army originally rested, was the most elevated and commanding of any on the field, constituting the divide between the waters of the Ny and the Rapidan. When



this was yielded, and in succession the positions at the Wilderness church, Melzie Chancellor's, and that on which Williams' division of the Twelfth corps had been posted before its withdrawal to go to the assistance of Sickles, General Hooker felt that he had no sufficient ground left on which to fight a general battle, as he could only use a moiety of his men, and in that cramped position he was a prey to an artillery fire that could be concentrated upon him from almost every point of the compass. Forced, as he was, suddenly and unexpectedly, into this pinched and constrained situation, the change of position was the only thing left for him to do.

But the determination to hold the more contracted position about Fairview a reasonable time for the arrival of Sedgwick, necessitated a battle. Indeed, the enemy would not have allowed the withdrawal to the new line, if Hooker had been disposed to move at once, without hard fighting. As we have seen, the battle was precipitated earlier than the enemy intended, one division being obliged to move before breakfasting. The sun had no sooner dispelled the mist which, on that morning, enshrouded the field, than the eagle eye of Stuart caught a view of the open, elevated ground about Hazel grove,\* which Sickles had been obliged to abandon, and immediately ordered thirty pieces to be concentrated thereon, which was speedily effected. The rapid concentration of such a weight of metal upon a point where it was brought within easy range of almost every part of the Union lines around Chancellorsville, proved very unfortunate for Hooker. These guns completely enfiladed the intrenchments of Geary, and the lines of Williams and Berry, and were in easy range of the artillery at Fairview. They could be answered by the guns at Fairview, but were too numerous and variously disposed to be silenced.

As already observed, the battle opened in an attempt of Heth, who led the front line of the enemy, to advance the right of his division, which had been doubled in by the attacks of Sickles on his flank. This was about the dawn of day, and the struggle, which

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\* "As the sun lifted the mist that shrouded the field, it was discovered that the ridge on the extreme right was a fine position for concentrating artillery. I immediately ordered thirty pieces to that point, and under the happy effects of the battalion system it was done quickly. The effect of this fire upon the enemy's batteries was superb."—General Stuart's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 260.

commenced with Graham's brigade, was the signal for the whole corps of Jackson to advance to the assault. The artillery at Fairview commanded much of the ground over which the rebel lines were advancing, though the density of the forest prevented a view of them.\* It was early spring time, and the buds were just bursting into leaf, while some of the more forward of the flowering plants and shrubs were already in blossom, and the pine thickets were in their perennial dress. But the skirmish line behind the outer barricades of the Union front, by their temporary resistance, served to develop the position of the oncoming masses of the enemy, and thus direct the fire of the artillery. By aiming low, the missiles, if they found an unobstructed passage from the trees, would ricochet, and if hurled into the bodies of the trees, produced no less consternation and destruction by the scattering of the fragments of the shivered trunks. On the extreme right of the Union line the artillery could not be used, as the ground was level, and would not admit of firing over the heads of the infantry, as was possible further to the left. Consequently, when the general advance was made, Thomas' brigade of Heth's division, and a regiment of Pender's brigade, which stood next, not encountering the Union artillery fire, continued to advance a long distance beyond the point where the rebel centre and right were checked and driven back.† The consequence was that General Hays, of the Second corps, who was on the extreme Union right, and whose line was considerably refused to protect this flank, was furiously attacked by the rapidly advancing troops of Pender and Thomas, and himself was wounded and taken prisoner with members of his staff. The troops of Thomas and Pender were, however, repulsed and driven back by this gallant brigade, French's division of the Second corps, Carroll's brigade in front, was rapidly moved to the support of Hays, and drove the enemy, taking about 300 prisoners, and recapturing a

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\* But let me here say that the thickness of the undergrowth very much obstructed the view of operations the whole of this day.

† My left regiment (Thirteenth North Carolina) not being subjected to the artillery fire, did not fall back, but continued to advance for a long distance, with the brigade on my left, and in this advance Lieutenant Ireland, Company E, rushed gallantly forward and captured Brigadier-General Hays and staff.—Pender's report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 274.

regiment which had fallen into the enemy's hands. Caldwell's brigade of Hancock's division, and Meagher's brigade which had been covering a point to right and rear of the whole line, were in succession ordered up, upon the Union right.

Upon the centre and left, where Berry and Williams had been originally posted, the fighting was of the most determined character. Again and again were the rebel lines brought up, only to be hurled back with incalculable slaughter. General Berry, one of the finest officers in the service, who was now leading the Second division (Hooker's old) of Sickles' corps, in the midst of the fight, and after having marshalled his men, when inextricable confusion and disaster seemed impending, and fought with an iron-hearted resolution the ever fresh masses of the foe, received the fatal bullet by which he was forever removed from the arena of battle. He seems to have had a presentiment of his impending fate; for in a conversation with General Geary on the field during the night of the 2d, he expressed the belief that he would not survive the conflict of the ensuing day.

The Third Maryland regiment, of the Twelfth corps, which occupied the left of Berry's line, gave way at a most critical stage of the battle, and Mott's brigade of that division was sent forward, and drove back the enemy, who had gained the left of Berry, with indescribable destruction. Not satisfied with regaining the lost position, Mott crossed the works, and repulsing the hostile masses, took many prisoners with their colors. Graham's brigade of Birney's division, which had opened the battle in the early dawn, had scarcely reached Chancellorsville, in obedience to the orders for contracting the lines, when it was again formed and ordered forward to the support of Williams, a portion of whose troops had nearly expended their ammunition, where it repulsed every fierce assault of the foe, and repeatedly charged across the breastworks and drove them back at the point of the bayonet. Colonel Franklin's brigade, of Whipple's division, was also sent to the support of Berry's hard-pressed line. The battery on the left of the road having been withdrawn from its advanced position, this brigade crossed to the left, and by a resolute charge turned back the oncoming tide of the enemy, sweeping everything before it. It was in this charge that

the intrepid Lieutenant-Colonel Chapin was mortally, and Major Higgins severely wounded. The Second brigade of Whipple's division, under command of Colonel Bowman, was posted in the immediate front, and to the left of the batteries at Fairview, where it was obliged to stand under the showers of minies poured into it from the charges of the rebel infantry, and the no less destructive but far more terrible shelling of artillery posted in range upon the heights at Hazel grove. The sharpshooters of Colonel Berdan, so famous for their marksmanship, were thrown upon the front and did excellent execution, the enemy fearlessly advancing in plain view. It was such a harvest of death as had never before been forced upon them to gather.

At the very height of the battle, when the enemy on all sides was pressing with overwhelming force, and the troops upon the contracted line were holding their positions only by the most desperate valor, General Hooker was struck, and for a considerable time rendered incapable of command. He was standing at the moment immediately in front of the Chancellor House, where were his headquarters, watching the progress of the battle. The enemy, by pushing up and occupying every available spot for his artillery, was able to bring a concentrating fire to bear upon this part of the field. While thus standing and anxiously directing the battle, a solid shot struck one of the pillars of the piazza, splitting it from end to end, and throwing one-half of it violently towards him, the concussion rendering him senseless, and for a few moments he was thought to be dying. The rumor spread rapidly that General Hooker had been killed. But he soon revived sufficiently from the effects of the stun to show himself to his troops, and by great force of will mounted his horse. He rode forward towards the White House; but just as he had reached the open field in front, the pain from the injury which he had received returned with such violence that he would have fallen, had not his staff rushed to his side and supported him to the ground. A blanket was spread, and he was laid upon it. Some remedy was administered, and he again revived sufficiently to be borne to a less exposed position; but scarcely had he been raised before a solid shot from one of the enemy's guns at Hazel grove struck the blanket in the identical spot where he had for the

moment rested. Nearly the entire day he suffered so great pain, as not to have the command of his faculties, his right side being partially paralyzed, and for weeks his side was livid, giving evidence of the terrible blow he had received.

It was a most critical juncture in the battle, and more than at any previous moment there was needed the unclouded judgment of the commanding general. General Couch, the next in rank, was sent for; but such was the force of will of General Hooker that he would not entirely relinquish the supreme authority, though enduring such intense bodily suffering as, in the judgment of his associate officers who were about him, to seriously affect his mental faculties and rob him of that dash, that rapidity of mental operation, which was a marked characteristic of his generalship. The paralysis, with which during his later years his entire right side was affected, was the result of this blow.

General Hooker's chief anxiety was, as it had been from the opening of the fight at the early dawn, to get his troops upon the new line of battle. He had now given up all hope of any co-operation from Sedgwick. But the enemy was pressing with too much violence upon the troops still holding the lines to withdraw them rapidly without incurring disaster. Sickles, who, with Williams, of Slocum's corps, had from the firing of the first gun been bearing the brunt of the battle, had now put in his last reserves, and the ammunition was running low. It was the Sabbath, and the hour had come when holy bells toll Christian congregations to worship Him whose mission was peace upon earth and good-will to men. But war, which exists by appeals to the fierce and angry passions, knows no sacred days. For five hours one of the most desperate and bloody conflicts known in the annals of warfare had been raging. It was a contracted field, scarcely a mile in length, and but a few rods in width, and around and over all was the gloomy, tangled wilderness, which even the unencumbered hunter rarely essayed to penetrate, and where game was as in its native wilds. Here brave men were subjected to such a fiery ordeal as could scarcely be matched in the prolific brain of a Milton or a Dante. Neither party would yield, while with the energy of despair charge and counter-charge were delivered with unsparing hand.

The storm of buck and ball, and tearing minie, was little more regarded than the hail of a summer shower, as the lines swept on and over breastworks bristling with bayonets, only to be driven back decimated and fainting from utter exhaustion. The fields literally ran blood, and the streamlets of the forest were crimsoned with the purple tide. A dense cloud of sulphurous smoke was perpetually rolled upon the field from the fiery mouths of a hundred brazen monsters. Bursting shells and deadly missiles were hurtled in the dense air like the thick coming snow-flakes in the midnight blackness of a storm-encumbered sea. The crash of musketry, the ear-bursting, deep-mouthed thunder of the artillery, the screech of the assailants, and the steady cheer of the counter-charge, were mingled in a cadence more fearful than the voice of the storm when awakened by the pealing of heaven's artillery, or the hoarse waves of the sea when aroused by the wintry tempest.

To add to the ordinary horrors of a fiercely contested field, the cry went down the lines, "The forest is on fire! The forest is on fire!" It was too true. Lifted by the intense heat, the flames mounted heavenward and carried upon their wings the charred fragments of leaves, and needles of the pine, the accumulations of annual foliage, which the bursting shells had fired, until the signal of the burning field was visible to the two great armies, and the country far around. It was a standard whose fiery folds challenged and defied the puny elements of man's warfare and the skill which directs mortal conflict. The fiery battle-ground was thickly covered with the wounded, the dead, and the dying. Brave men as ever slept on tented field, or faced a foe in the hour of battle, by the chances of the conflict had been left bleeding and helpless on that fatal ground. And could no human sympathy reach them? Must they thus miserably perish, wrung with the martyr's anguish? The path of the conflagration was along the most desperately contested ground, and the course of the fight went on unchecked. Tongues of flame licked up the dry foliage, and leaped onward unstayed. Scarcely had the fire spent itself, and passed to feed upon new material for its insatiate maw, before the charging squadrons rushed on over the charred remains of fallen comrades, and were scorched by live coals in their fiery course. It was not a

time to question the manner of death. A victory must be gained, and the mad ambition that ruled the hour recked not of bleeding wounds nor bursting heart-strings, of slow torture nor glowing pyre. Of the more than 20,000 who went down in the dread fight, by far the larger part fell on this little belt of forest through which a solitary brook murmured, unheeding the clamor above and around, and unquenched by the blazing tide that swept over it.



## CHAPTER IX.

### RETIREMENT OF THE UNION FORCES TO THE FINAL LINE OF BATTLE.



THE contracted field over which the battle of the morning of the 3d was waged enabled the enemy to bring up his troops in heavy lines, and as fast as one was broken and exhausted another was ready to take its place. Instead of seeming to be weakened, the longer the struggle was maintained, the more recklessly were his troops rushed on, until they appeared to come in crowds rather than in any regular formation. \* "The enemy commenced his attack," says General Williams, of the Twelfth corps, "at the earliest dawn of the 3d, pushing his column through the woods in our front with wonderful vigor and obstinacy. He was successfully resisted at all points of my lines, and, although his attacks were almost without cessation, he was repeatedly driven back in confusion during three to four hours, always, however, replacing his broken columns with fresh troops. . . . This desperate struggle in front and flank by artillery and infantry continued almost without cessation until about half-past 8 A. M. My regiments had literally exhausted their ammunition. Some of them had been twenty-four hours without food, and most of them for several nights with but little sleep while engaged in intrenching. My regiments had several times crossed the breastworks to attack the enemy's repulsed columns; but the nature of the ground, the thickness of the underbrush, the heavy and greatly outnumbering columns of the enemy always at hand, as well as their positions on either flank of my line, admon-

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\* General Williams' official report, MS.



ished me to act on the defensive until a more favorable moment for the offensive should present itself."

In the meantime Anderson, of Lee's column, had pushed forward his left until it connected with the right of Jackson's forces, thus reuniting the two wings of the rebel army, and General Lee had now arrived upon the field and was directing the battle. Sickles had noticed that the enemy pressed with special pertinacity upon his extreme left and upon his right centre, near the plank road, and here he was obliged to concentrate his force, and bring every available gun into requisition. Already his ammunition began to fail, and he called for reinforcements to take the places of his decimated columns. But fresh troops failed to come, and the vital points of the line could not yet be abandoned. His worn and wasted troops were ordered to hold their positions with the bayonet, and made repeated charges over the breastworks after their last round of ammunition was gone, and the moiety gathered from the bodies of the dead had been expended. The calls for support were made more urgent; but it was now the policy of the commanding general to bring in all his troops upon the new line, and, under cover of the terrible fire of the artillery, the lines facing the east began to move in. Artillery ammunition had been freely spent. But it was now becoming momentarily more hazardous to fetch up new supplies. Finally the artillery was drawn in midway between Fairview and Chancellorsville, where it again went into position, and the infantry retired to the breastworks vacated by the artillery, where a fresh supply of ammunition was distributed. The enemy were quick to follow up their advantage, and rushed forward to profit by the movement. But the infantry of Sickles were well posted to receive them and check their exultant progress. And now the artillery being unprotected by intrenchments suffered severely from the fire of the rebel infantry, and the loss in both men and horses was severe. Resolutely the infantry held their ground. "Charge after charge," says General Sickles,\* "was made by this gallant brigade (Mott's) under Colonel Sewell, of the Fifth New Jersey, before it was withdrawn, terribly reduced and mutilated, from the post assigned it. Its stern resistance to the impulsive assaults of the enemy, and the brilliant

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\* General Sickles' official report, MS.

charges made in return, were worthy of the 'Old Guard.' No soldier could refuse a tribute of admiration in remembrance of the last charge made. A small body, for a regiment, drove the enemy out of the rifle-pits near Fairview before withdrawing, and returned with forty men, whose sole reliance in this charge was in the bayonet—every cartridge having been expended moments before."

Sickles now withdrew his artillery, which passed to the new position, and formed his infantry in three lines about the Chancellor house, on the right of General Hancock, of Couch's corps. Tyler's brigade, of Humphrey's division of the Fifth corps, had also been ordered out to the support of French upon the right of the line in front of and to the right of the White House, where a hot fire was kept up until its ammunition was expended, and where the enemy vigorously assailed it.

It was now past ten o'clock. Since five in the morning the battle had been raging with scarcely an interruption. In accordance with the plan of the commanding general, the Union line had been gradually drawn in, and had finally begun to pass to the ground he had selected on which to receive the rebel attacks. The guns of Lewis, Seeley, and Randolph were the last to make a stand on the Fairview front, never slackening fire until every round of ammunition was expended. But now there was visible exhaustion in the enemy's ranks, and when Seeley finally withdrew his guns he "brought with him all the harness from thirty or forty of his dead and wounded horses, leaving no trophy of his battery on the field except the memorable loss it had inflicted on the enemy." When the infantry likewise moved back to the junction of the United States and Ely's ford roads, it moved deliberately and without serious molestation, the enemy refusing to follow up, and General Sickles reports having taken "at least four hundred prisoners," while retiring. Lepine's battery of the First corps, however, was furiously assailed on this part of the field, and in thirty minutes lost by death and wounds three out of four officers, forty men, and as many horses, the infantry being obliged to withdraw the pieces by hand.

Late at night, or rather early on the morning of the 3d, General Hooker had issued the following order for the posting of troops on the new line: "General Reynolds will post his corps, the right

resting on the Rapidan, on the east bank of Hunting run, and extending along that run up to the crossing of the Chancellorsville and Ely's ford roads, and thence along that road in the direction of Chancellorsville. General Sykes will form on his left along the same road, and this whole line will be supported by the remaining portion of any corps of General Meade. General Reynolds will throw well out to the front a line of skirmishers to give him timely notice of any approach of an enemy. General Howard will throw his corps on to the line now occupied by General Meade, and will also throw his pickets well out along his whole line, for the purpose of keeping himself informed of the movements of the enemy. These lines must be held at all hazards. The Second, Twelfth, and Third corps will hold their present positions until further orders, sending all their wagons and spare batteries immediately to take post in the vicinity of United States Ford."

It was in the position indicated by this order that General Hooker's army stood at the opening of the great battle on the morning of the 3d, the fighting being almost exclusively done by the Third, Twelfth, and Second corps, the most desperate and persistent attacks being delivered upon the Third corps and Williams' division of the Twelfth. But as soon as it was decided to abandon entirely the position at Chancellorsville, and gather all in upon the more contracted line, new dispositions were ordered. The Eleventh corps had, early in the day, relieved the Fifth, which had been brought up to the centre, where Humphrey's had been put into the battle, Sykes had been placed on the right centre of the new line on the left of the First, and Griffin in support. As the Third corps retired it was at first put in support of the Fifth, but was subsequently brought up to the front, occupying the apex of the new line at the centre and connecting with Sykes of the Fifth on the right. On the left of Sickles was Couch of the Second corps, who connected with the right of the Eleventh, and on the extreme left, beyond the Eleventh, overlooking the Rappahannock, were posted the remnants of the two divisions of the Twelfth corps. On account of the thick wood which covered almost this entire ground there were few positions where artillery could be used to advantage. Ground was, however, selected and the guns placed in three large

batteries, one on the left of the line of thirty guns, twenty rifles and ten light twelve-pounders under Captain Randal, one of forty-eight guns, twenty-four twelve-pounders, and twenty-four three-inch, at the angle of the line near the White House, under Captain Weed, and one of thirty-two guns, twenty light rifles and twelve twelve-pounders on the right of the line near Hunting creek, commanded by Colonel Wainwright.\*

This then was the position in which the Union army finally stood, and which it proceeded to fortify, covering the front with tangled abatis. The enemy did not immediately attack, but at the angle threw out a cloud of skirmishers and sharpshooters, who greatly annoyed the men while attempting to establish and strengthen the line. But the rebel officers, whatever may have been the disposition of the men, were eager to push forward and press the Union troops to the last extremity. General Jackson, just before he received his mortal wound, was remonstrated with for exposing himself so much. "There is no danger," was his answer. "Go back and tell General Hill to press on." He was preparing to make a fresh onset when he was stricken down. An aide had reported to General Lee that it had been the expressed intention of General Jackson to press the enemy on the morrow (Sunday). "Those people shall be pressed," was the laconic reply of Lee. And well was the sentence executed. Accordingly, when the battle at Chancellorsville closed, a little respite was given in the rebel army for replenishing ammunition and taking some refreshments, but only for a brief interval, and then the pressure was resumed. The rebel soldiers were worn out with long marching and incessant and desperate fighting, but the battle must be renewed, and the whereabouts and con-

\* Waterman's, C, First R. I. (second sec.), four three-inch; Barnes', C, First N. Y., four three-inch; Phillip's, E, First Mass., six three inch; Hazlett's, D, Fifth U. S., six ten-pounders; Randal's, E, First U. S., four twelve-pounders; Martin's, C, First Mass., six twelve-pounders; Kirby's, I, First U. S., six twelve-pounders; Fitzhugh's, K, First N. Y., four three-inch; Rickett's, F, First Pa., four three-inch; Ames', G, First N. Y., six twelve-pounders; Martin's, I, Fifth U. S., four three-inch; Gibbs', L, First Ohio, six twelve-inch; Waterman's, C, First R. I. (first section), two three-inch; Bruen's Tenth N. Y., six twelve-pounders; Edgell's, A, First N. Y., six three inch; Ransom's, C, Fifth U. S., six twelve-pounders; Stewart's, B, Fourth U. S., six twelve-pounders; Hall's Second Maine, six three-inch; Weidieck's, I, First N. Y., four three-inch; Knapp's First Pa., four ten-pounders; Reynold's, L, First N. Y., six three-inch.

dition of the Union line must be known. \* "It was now about twelve o'clock," says General Colston, who commanded Hill's division of Jackson's corps. "The enemy was driven beyond Chancellorsville. The troops of my division were almost entirely without ammunition, having expended all their own, besides a large quantity of Yankee ammunition. They were accordingly withdrawn to the rear, and supplied with fresh ammunition and with rations, of which they stood in great need, and their shattered ranks were reformed. No further movement took place until about three o'clock (P. M.) At this time I received an order to report in person to General Lee. Upon my doing so, the general ordered me to form my division perpendicular to the road leading from the Chancellorsville house towards the United States ford, to throw forward skirmishers, and to advance for the purpose of feeling and ascertaining the enemy's position, not of taking his batteries. To this he added that the road turned to the right at about a quarter of a mile distant, but that I would probably meet opposition before I got there. I accordingly formed my troops on both sides of the road, Nichol's and Colston's brigades being on the left, and Jones' and Paxton's on the right. I ordered Lieutenant Hinrichs, of the engineers, to advance with the skirmishers and reconnoitre the enemy's position. The command was then given for the division to move forward. Hardly had they advanced a few paces, when a terrific fire of shell and canister was opened by the enemy, from a battery of twelve pieces of artillery. I ordered a section of Napoleon guns to advance up the road, and to reply to the enemy's fire. There was no other spot than the road in which they could be placed, and that was too narrow to allow a large number of pieces to be put in battery. Finding that they would be speedily silenced, and probably with useless loss of life and material by the enemy's superior artillery, I ordered them back after a few rounds. In the meantime, perceiving some confusion on the left of the road, I proceeded there and found the Tenth Louisiana regiment exposed to a perfect storm of grape and shell, and rapidly giving way. Seconded by my aid, Lieutenant Tosh, and by the gallant exertions of the officers of this regiment, whose conduct deserves the highest

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\* General Colston's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 272.

praise, I succeeded in arresting this retrograde movement, in spite of the enemy's continued fire ; but the carnage in this small regiment was great. In less than two minutes, fifty officers and men fell, killed and wounded, by my side, including Lieutenant-Colonel Leggett, who was instantly killed by a shell. The remainder of the brigade suffered in a less degree, some portions having advanced inside of the point where the enemy's shot were falling. By this time it was ascertained that the enemy occupied a formidable position ; twelve pieces of artillery were planted in barbette, at the top of the first hill, and a line of intrenchments, occupied by infantry, stretched out on each side of the artillery, occupying a front much wider than that of my division. Another line of infantry, preceded by skirmishers, was drawn up outside of the works. To advance in the face of such a force, with a division so much reduced as mine was, would have been only to have insured its destruction, and would have been contrary to the instructions I had received from the general commanding. I accordingly reported to General Stuart, who was, for the time, my immediate commander, that my division was not able to attack, with any prospect of success, the position of the enemy." This passage, which is taken from General Colston's official report, makes a long story out of a very short one. Had he said that he advanced with his division, consisting of four brigades, against the new Union line, and was repulsed with great slaughter, he would have simply said all that there was to say.

The fact was that the position itself was strong, was being well fortified, and was defended on all sides by troops that felt as resolute and ready for fight as they had at any time since the opening of the battle. Indeed they now challenged attack. But the enemy at once settled down upon a line confronting that taken by General Hooker, and set vigorously to work to fortify. It was now evidently the intention of neither of the contending armies to take the initiative, and beyond strong reconnoissances sent out all along the lines from each side to try the strength and vulnerability of the other, and vigorous sharpshooting upon the skirmish lines, nothing was undertaken, neither party being willing to take the chances of a general battle by advancing upon the other while awaiting attack behind his intrenchments. These reconnoissances, however, were

frequent and forceful. "On Sunday evening," says Captain Brockway, of Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery, "we relieved Seeley's regular battery, which had lost fifty men and as many horses. The distance across the field to the enemy was only two hundred and fifty yards, and you can imagine with what intensity we watched their movements. We unhitched our horses and sent them to the rear, as the orders were to hold the place at all hazards, and retreat could not be considered. We silently piled the canister by the muzzles of our pieces, as no other ammunition would avail much at that distance. An attack at ten o'clock in the evening drove in our pickets, and we double-shotted our guns with canister. The balls flew thicker than hail; but no fear nor trepidation was evinced, and the enemy were compelled to retire. They advanced several times during the night, but dared not charge up to the muzzles of our guns. The infantry, to protect themselves, commenced throwing up intrenchments, which were nearly completed by daylight. On Monday, the 4th inst., Griffin's division made a reconnoissance from our front, and found the enemy heavily intrenched along the plank road, and evidently waiting to be attacked. Throughout the entire day we were annoyed by their sharpshooters. General Whipple\* (commanding the Third division of Sickles' corps) was shot by one of them close to our battery. Some of Berdan's sharpshooters finally silenced them, except one persistent fellow, stationed behind a large tree, in the forks of which he rested his rifle. He put six bullets on the sapling which covered one of Berdan's men. He was finally brought down by setting three men at work upon him. On his person was found \$48 in gold, \$4.50 in silver, \$200 in green backs, \$50 in Confederate money, and three packs of cards."

This brief fragment from the diary of an officer who was at the fore front, on the new line of battle, is a fair specimen of the manner in which either side tried the strength of the other during the three days in which the two armies thus confronted each other. During the 3d General Reynolds reports that his pickets and

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\* The works were begun under an annoying fire of the enemy's sharpshooters, who were soon handsomely driven by Berdan, to whom the outposts were confided, but not until the brave and accomplished Brigadier-General A. W. Whipple, commanding the Third division, had fallen mortally wounded while directing in person the construction of the field works in his front. General Sickles' report, MS.

scouts\* thrown forward from his front were constantly bringing in prisoners from the woods, while his troops were employed in strengthening their position and clearing the ground for placing the artillery. On the 4th, the skirmishers on the left of his line were engaged more or less during the entire day, and somewhat later, those on the right, in front of the division of General Robinson, were for a short time engaged, while an attack was threatened. During the afternoon of this day two regiments of infantry, with a section of artillery, General Robinson in command, were sent, under orders from General Hooker, to reconnoitre the road to Ely's ford, and reported that the position was occupied by the enemy in force. Towards five o'clock a brigade of the Third division, under Colonel Roy Stone, was ordered to follow up Hunting creek in the direction of the plank road, nearly due south, which, after having driven in the enemy's skirmishers, found itself in the presence of what appeared to be a brigade of infantry, with the road which it had followed barricaded by fallen trees. It being nearly dark before the brigade reached its position, it was deemed inexpedient to attack, the fact having been already clearly developed that the enemy was present in force, and strongly posted.

The posting and forming the troops of the enemy on the new confronting line was given to General Rodes. † "As soon as our artillery fire," he says, "would permit, the heights were occupied by the infantry, and, by order of General Stuart, I took charge of arranging all the troops found on the field in line of battle, parallel to the plank road. . . My troops were located as follows: Iverson's brigade on the right, extending from Chancellorsville house up the plank road; next, Rodes' brigade, then Ramseur's brigade, and finally Doles' brigade, all parallel and close to the road. Doles was subsequently thrown across the road, and at an angle of forty-five degrees with it, connecting with General Pender, by whom this line was continued on to the left. Colston's division, now attached to my command, was located on the turnpike road, to the right, and in continuation of my line. Colquitt's brigade was placed *en echelon* with reference to both Iverson and Colston, and one hundred yards

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\* Report of General Reynolds, MS.

† General Rodes' official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 303.



in rear, to enable our artillery to operate in the interval. This position was strongly fortified, and was held without molestation until Tuesday morning, when I pushed forward my whole line of skirmishers to feel the enemy. He was discovered to be in very great force, both of infantry and artillery, with formidable intrenchments." Heth's division (Hill's) was posted to the right, confronting the Twelfth and Eleventh corps, and McLaws and Anderson's divisions, until their withdrawal, were in support of these and uniting their lines. In mentioning Lieutenant Brown, who was several days in charge of the sharpshooters of his brigade, General Pender says: \* "He is a young man who deserves promotion. He held his skirmishers so close to the enemy's breastworks on Monday and Tuesday as to pick off their artillery horses, men working on their trenches, and any one seen mounted. He drove in their skirmishers on all occasions." General Doles, of Rodes' division, says: † "On Tuesday, the 5th, the skirmishers were ordered to press forward and feel the enemy, and ascertain his position and strength. They found him in strong numbers and well intrenched."

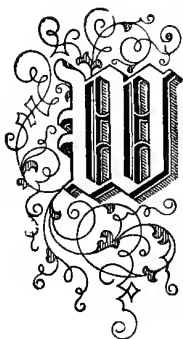
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\* General Pender's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 275.

† General Doles' official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 280.

## CHAPTER X.

### SEDGWICK AT FREDERICKSBURG AND SALEM CHURCH.



WHEN General Hooker sent the order at 9 o'clock, on the evening of the 2d of May, to General Sedgwick, to cross the river at Fredericksburg and march immediately to form junction with him at Chancellorsville, and to accomplish this by dawn of the 3d, it was with the expectation that he was still on the north bank of the Rapahannock. But General Sedgwick had previously received two orders, the one at a little before dark on the evening of the 2d, directing him "to cross the river as soon as indications would permit, and capture Fredericksburg, and vigorously pursue the enemy;" the other, very shortly after, at five minutes past seven, directing him to pursue the enemy on the Bowling Green road. In obedience to these orders General Sedgwick called in the two divisions of his corps still on the left bank, and at 9 P. M. crossed the river at Franklin's crossing. On attempting to advance on the Bowling Green road, he immediately encountered the enemy, and sharp skirmishing ensued. Little progress was, accordingly, made, and at eleven o'clock that night he received the imperative order to march to Chancellorsville.

It was the opinion of General Warren,\* who was sent by General Hooker from Chancellorsville, to advise with General Sedgwick about the route to be taken, and to urge him to expedition in the march, that the enemy, as soon as they discovered the movement of Sedgwick's corps to the south bank of the river, had placed a line of skirmishers around his column, so that the moment he attempted to move in any direction he would run into it, and the enemy would

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\* Warren's testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 47.

thus be immediately advised of the direction in which he was attempting to go.

General Sedgwick was in line of battle, on the river opposite Franklin's crossing, when the order to move reached him, and he at once made preparations to put his column upon the march. General Newton, commanding his Third division, took the advance, followed by General Howe of the Second division. The First division, under General Brooks, was left to confront the enemy, with whom it was at the time skirmishing, and, by vigorous demonstrations, to detain the forces of the foe in the intrenchments on the heights in his front, until the works about Fredericksburg were carried. No sooner had the head of Newton's column commenced to move, than the rebel skirmish line was encountered, which kept up a scattering fire as it fell back before the advancing troops, thus notifying the enemy of the progress which the Union column was making.

When the main body of the rebel army, under Lee and Jackson, abandoned their fortifications at Fredericksburg, and marched away to Chancellorsville, the division of General Early, and Barksdale's brigade of McLaw's division, with a reserve of artillery under General Pendleton, were left to hold these works, and guard an important depot of supplies at Hamilton's crossing. General Early, with his entire division, was on the right of the rebel line, stretching from the Bowling Green road to a point opposite the Howison House. Barksdale's single brigade held the heights from Early's left to Taylor's hill, a point on the Rappahannock above the city. Pendleton had made a good use of his artillery, placing it in commanding positions along Marye's hill, Lee's hill, and the intermediate ground. Being instantly advised of the advance of the Union column, by the firing of their skirmishers, the enemy were everywhere on the alert. The activity of Sedgwick early in the evening, on the Bowling Green road, now favored his advance on Fredericksburg, as the enemy was kept in doubt about the direction from which the blow was to come, and the leaving of Brook's division on Early's front kept that general with his entire division on that part of the field, thus compelling Barksdale, with one brigade, to cover nearly three miles of front.

It was daylight before the head of Newton's column reached the city, and immediately on entering, four regiments from Wheaton's and Shaler's brigades were ordered to advance upon the rifle-pits in front of the enemy's works. They made the charge upon that part of the line protected by the famous stone-wall, at the foot of Marye's hill, where, in the previous December, Burnside had suffered, and in vain assaulted with terrible slaughter. They approached within twenty yards of the works, but were finally repulsed by the fire from the rifle-pits, and the batteries on the heights. This attack served to develop the strength and position of the enemy on this part of the field, as well as to put them on the alert for meeting other attacks, which it was now evident were soon to come.

General Gibbon had been ordered early in the night to cross from Falmouth with his division, and join Sedgwick in driving the enemy from the heights, and when that was accomplished, to hold the town, so that Sedgwick might have his entire corps with which to make his advance. The laying of the bridge, for the passage of his division, which was commenced early in the night, opposite the Lacy house, was not completed in time for him to cross before daylight of the 3d. At two o'clock A. M. General Barksdale was apprised of the preparations of Gibbon for crossing, and General Hays with his brigade was sent, by General Early, to the help of the rebel left, and General Wilcox, who was at Bank's ford, sent down a part of his brigade to the same destination. After the failure of the first advance of Sedgwick, which must be regarded more in the light of a feint, than a serious attack, preparations were made for a general assault, and, as preliminary thereto, a hot artillery fire was opened along the Union line, which was answered by General Pendleton from all the heights, this artillery duel lasting from six until nearly ten o'clock.\* General Gibbon was at first ordered to proceed upon the extreme Union right, and turn the left of the rebel position; but, upon advancing, he found that a canal, which takes water from the river above and conducts it in rear of the town for manufacturing purposes, was flooded, and all the bridges taken up, and he would be obliged to work under fire in relaying them. General Howe, who had not yet crossed Hazel run, and who had been

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\* Colonel Johns' testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 39.

ordered to advance, and endeavor to turn the right of the rebel position on Marye's heights, found that the character of Hazel run, and the force displayed in his front, precluded any hope of success on his part.

Meanwhile General Sedgwick had determined to storm the rebel works in his front. But it was eleven o'clock before the storming parties were formed ready for the onset. Preparatory thereto, Colonel Johns, of the Seventh Massachusetts, was early thrown into the city cemetery, an elevated piece of ground within the corporate limits, surrounded by a brick wall, where he could securely observe the movements of the enemy, and prepare for the charge. The troops composing the storming parties were formed in two columns. The right, commanded by Colonel George C. Spear, consisted of the Sixty-first Pennsylvania, Major Dawson, and Forty-third New York, Colonel Baker, supported by the Sixty-seventh New York, Colonel Cross, and the Eighty-second Pennsylvania, Major Bassett, led by Colonel Shaler. The left consisted of the Seventh Massachusetts, Colonel Johns, and Thirty-sixth New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Welsh. The line of battle, commanded by Colonel Burnham, consisted of the Fifth Wisconsin, Colonel Allen, Sixth Maine, Lieutenant-Colonel Harris, Thirty-first New York, Colonel Jones, and Twenty-third Pennsylvania, Colonel Ely, the latter volunteering. The column moved along the plank road, and to the right of it directly up the heights. The line of battle advanced on the double quick to the left of the plank, against the rifle-pits, neither party halting nor firing a shot until they had driven the enemy from their lower line of works. "At ten minutes past eleven o'clock," says Colonel Johns, "I moved by the flank on the telegraph road. This road led through the enemy's works. The stone wall near the base of Marye's hill crossed the road, extending on each side of it. I moved my troops up in good order. I noticed the rebels looking at us, and was surprised that they did not fire sooner. They did not fire at us at all until we got within perhaps three hundred yards of the wall. They then opened upon us, with which, however, they did not effect much, as they could not get depression enough to strike us. But we had a strong enfilading fire from both sides. I noticed, as we approached, men poking their heads up over the wall. They

commenced firing upon us. It seemed to me that the men inside the wall stood as thick as they possibly could. I think that there were two ranks of them; the front rank would fire, and then be relieved by the rear rank. At all events, apparently the greater portion of their force was crowded in behind the stone wall on each side of the road. I advanced at the head of the brigade and made a charge; but we were repulsed. They broke the head of my column badly at the first fire. The men were moving up in good order, but this tremendous fire coming so suddenly, broke the head of my column; the rear of the column did not break. I rallied them, and got up perhaps fifty yards nearer. This firing continued all the time, and it is very difficult to rally men under actual fire. Still, I rallied them, and came up again. But the head of my column broke again. It of course received the severest part of the fire. I was struck myself at that charge, but not disabled. I got my men up a third time, and we went right ahead then and did not stop at all. A portion got through on the road, and a portion went off on the right, and got over the wall and behind the enemy, and that gave us possession of the works. At the last charge I was struck again, and very seriously injured, and was carried off the field. In about fifteen minutes one of my wounded men came back, and said that the regiment had carried the heights, and our colors were there."

With equal determination, but with less delay, the column on the right went forward, and carried the heights in its front. Colonel Spear, who led, received a mortal hurt. In the meantime General Howe, who was still below Hazel run, received orders to join in the assault. Hastily forming in three lines he awaited the signal of attack upon the right. At the sound of the first gun he moved onward, keeping to the left of Deep run, and entered the enemy's lines at the Howison house. Immediately veering to the right, he swept down the rebel lines, taking prisoners and guns, and clearing Lee's hill, the Eighteenth and Twenty-first Mississippi regiments, and the celebrated Washington artillery being captured. The victory was complete; but was purchased at the sacrifice of a thousand men. Though opposed by a much smaller number, yet, sheltered as the enemy were, by strong works, and having full opportunity for con-

centrating upon the threatened points, they were able to make a formidable resistance. Hays' brigade, which had been dispatched by General Early from below, and the regiments of Wilcox, sent from above, were unable to give much direct support, so quickly did the Union troops carry the works when once in motion. As soon as the struggle was decided, General Early withdrew his forces from their position on the heights, and formed across the telegraph road at the point where the military road meets it.\*

General Sedgwick now brought up his entire corps. Brook's division, which he had left confronting Early and covering the Franklin bridge, having over two miles to march, was awaited, and upon its arrival was put in advance to lead the column in the march to join Hooker, followed in succession by Newton and Howe. It was three o'clock in the afternoon of the 3d, before the corps got fairly in motion. General Wilcox, who had come with his brigade from Bank's ford to the assistance of Barksdale, having no sooner learned that the Fredericksburg heights had been carried, and that Barksdale had been routed, than he proposed to General Hays to form line on the heights in front of the Stanbury hill, reaching across the plank road, and make a stand. But Hays had received positive orders to retire, and rejoin the division of General Early. Being left alone, Wilcox, with a courage and a resolution rarely witnessed, determined to show a bold front with his single brigade, and, accordingly, drew it up in line at right angles to the plank, upon a crest just in front of Stanbury's, placing two rifled pieces in rear of the left of his line, and two others just in front of his right, and awaited the approach of Sedgwick. The artillery on both sides opened at long range, and the skirmishers of Sedgwick cautiously approached, the artillery duel being kept up, his line of battle apparently reluctant to advance. Having delayed the column a considerable time, and judging that Sedgwick was outflanking him, Wilcox withdrew by the river road, and hastened forward to Salem church. As the plank is a much more direct route to the church than that by the river, Sedgwick could easily have beaten Wilcox in the march thither. But the latter was first on the ground. That he might delay Sedgwick as much as possible, and give himself time

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\* General Howe's testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 21.

to reach the church and throw up some protection, Wilcox sent Major Collins with a company of cavalry over to the plank, with orders to deploy a part of his command dismounted as skirmishers, on either side of the road just in rear of a thicket of pine. The firing of these troopers from this concealed position made the head of Sedgwick's columns cautious. By the time this little force had been routed, Wilcox had reached Salem church and taken position, at right angles to the plank, upon the crest which crosses the road near the toll-gate, and as soon as Sedgwick made his appearance opened fire upon his column with artillery, and followed it up with infantry. In the meantime, Lee had been studiously kept informed of Sedgwick's movements, and when he found that the heavy fighting on his immediate front at Chancellorsville was over—hearing that the heights at Fredericksburg had been taken, and that the Union line was commencing to advance towards Chancellorsville—determined to detach a sufficient force from his main body to crush the single corps of Sedgwick. He accordingly ordered General McLaws to go with his division, and Mahone's brigade of Anderson's division, to the support of Wilcox. McLaws arrived at Salem church just as Wilcox was going into position at the toll-gate, and before the columns of Sedgwick had come up.

After maintaining a brisk skirmish here for a short time, Wilcox retired to the rear of Salem church, where he took up the position which he had chosen at right angles to the plank, with large open fields in rear, and a dense curtain of wood in front, where some works had been thrown up, posting two of his regiments on the right of the road, and two on the left, his line being well garnished with artillery, and a body of sharpshooters thrown forward to the church and the school-house a short distance in front of the line. Upon the arrival of General McLaws he assumed command, and posted General Semmes' brigade in line, on the left of Wilcox, and General Mahone's brigade still further towards the river, on the left of Semmes; upon the right of Wilcox he planted Kershaw's brigade, and upon the right of Kershaw the brigade of General Wofford. This was a strong position, with open ground to the rear over which troops and guns could be wheeled to right or left, as the exigencies of the fight might require, besides having considerable arti-



ficial cover. It will thus be seen that there was upon this line the division of McLaws, and two brigades of Anderson, all fresh troops, and eager to engage. Besides, the division of Early was somewhere upon the rear in a threatening attitude. General Gibbon confined himself to the occupation and defense of Fredericksburg, which he partially fortified. Hence, he was practically out of the fight, not even holding Early on his front.

Supposing that he had only the brigade of Wilcox to oppose him, which he had easily driven, General Sedgwick went forward with the greater confidence. Wilcox, in his stand at the toll-gate, had shrewdly held the troops arriving from Chancellorsville out of sight, concealed behind the dense woods, where they were kept busy in intrenching. Upon the first appearance of opposition at Salem church, Brooks' division, which was in advance, was formed to attack, Bartlett's brigade in line of battle on the left of the road, Torbet's New Jersey brigade on the right, and Russell's, with the artillery, upon the centre, ready to act as occasion might require. It was known that the enemy was in the woods in front; but it was supposed to be the rear guard of his retreating column, and the information had been obtained from rebel deserters, perhaps sent back to mislead, that the enemy's trains had fallen into hopeless confusion and might easily be captured. Without pausing to shell the woods, or develop the strength of the foe on his front, Brooks' division was pushed forward, on the very heels of the skirmishers, until it came suddenly upon the well-massed rebel forces drawn up in ambush, awaiting the advance. Brooks found himself vastly outnumbered, and outflanked on either side, by forces under cover of skilfully constructed rifle-pits and barricades, while his own men were marching up all unconcerned and unsuspecting of any considerable confronting force, presenting the best possible marks for the rebel riflemen. The consequence was that Brooks was overwhelmed and driven back at the first onset, with a loss of at least a quarter of his division, which fell with particular severity upon officers. Wheaton's brigade of Newton's division was sent out upon the right of Brooks, and other troops of the corps were pushed up to the support of his hard-pressed men. Wheaton went into position by the Morrison house, and advancing, crossed a deep ravine, and ascending the bluffs on

the opposite side, found, on crossing the ridge beyond, the enemy behind earthworks in timber, and the undergrowth filled with rifle-pits and abatis, and was soon engaged under a terrific fire of musketry from a hidden foe. "To sustain this fire many minutes," says General Wheaton in his report, "was evidently impossible, and I immediately dispatched staff officers to the rear to bring up troops with which to form a second line, and others to assist in delaying the retirement of my two small regiments, which it was anticipated must soon occur. Before they were pushed back, the troops on the left were driven towards us in confusion, by overwhelming odds, and by the time the second line was formed, the battalions of the enemy were rushing up the ravine we had just crossed, and for a few minutes it seemed hardly possible to hold our position; but the rebel regiments could not keep formed under our heavy fire, and gradually retired with heavy loss, while our most advanced line moved off in good order by its right flank, and formed in rear of the batteries behind our second. As the enemy retired, our lines advanced; but to attempt the woods again, with our present force, was not deemed possible, and we held the crest this side. Night came on, and we turned our attention to procuring ammunition, and aid for our wounded."

Attacking, as the corps did, at a great disadvantage, practically plunging headlong into an ambuscade, it lost heavily without inflicting any corresponding injury upon the foe. In illustration of the loss sustained, the Ninety-fifth Pennsylvania may be taken as an example. Of about three hundred, present for duty when the movement opened, five officers and eighteen enlisted men were killed, eight officers and one hundred and two enlisted men were wounded, more than thirty of them mortally, and thirty-seven were taken prisoners and missing, an aggregate of one hundred and sixty-nine. Colonel Town, Lieutenant-Colonel Hall, Captain Chapman, Adjutant Dunton and Lieutenant Hailer were of the killed, and Major Town, Captains Roberts and West, and Lieutenants Stewart, Town, Gelston, Topham and Jones of the wounded. The losses in the One Hundred and Nineteenth Pennsylvania were hardly less severe. Of four hundred and thirty-two for duty, it had twelve killed, and one hundred and twelve wounded. Nearly a fifth of the whole corps was by this time *hors du combat*.

General Early, who, upon the capture of the heights above Fredericksburg by Sedgwick, had retired upon the telegraph road towards Spottsylvania Court-House, and taken up a defensive position, advanced on the morning of the 4th, and reoccupied the works from which he had been driven, Gibbon holding his small division within the city, having fortified it and put it in a state of defence. \* "The next morning," (the 4th) says General Barksdale, "the line of battle was formed on the river road, General Gordon in front, General Hays on the left, and my brigade on the right of the road. It was soon discovered that Lee's and Marye's hills had been abandoned by the enemy. General Gordon took possession of Marye's hill without opposition. My brigade was ordered to the stone wall in front of the hill; and I was ordered to send out skirmishers, and if the town was not strongly defended to storm and take it. I at once sent out both scouts and skirmishers, both of whom reported that, in their judgment, the town was in a state of strong defence: that rifle-pits had been dug across the streets, and that cannon had been planted on both sides of the river, which completely commanded the entire town."

As the fighting on Brooks' front, at Salem church, had not commenced till towards nightfall, active operations were finally checked by darkness, the Union troops sleeping on their arms on the field, and the enemy holding on to their intrenchments and rifle-pits. General Lee finding that the Sixth corps had been making a stubborn fight, determined to go in person and take command, and to order up Anderson with the three remaining brigades of his division—Wright's, Perry's and Posey's, not already there, to the aid of McLaws and Early. General Lee arrived at Salem church at 11 A. M. of the 4th, simultaneously with the head of Anderson's column. To this time McLaws had done little more than keep up a vigorous skirmishing, evidently intent on hugging his breastworks in his advantageous position, and endeavoring to induce General Sedgwick to attack. But the latter had now given up all intention of resuming the offensive, and was only solicitous to bring his corps into a position where he could hold his own. He accordingly ordered General Howe to about face, and extend his division to the left and

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\* Barksdale's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 286.

rear, until his left should reach to the river, as he now saw indications of an intention upon the part of the enemy to move upon his left flank. Unfortunately for General Sedgwick, he was early in the day informed that a force of 15,000 men had come up from the direction of Richmond, and taken position upon the Fredericksburg heights, thus cutting off his communications with the town. No such force had arrived, and no rebel force was on his rear other than Early's division and Barksdale's brigade, which had been confronting him from the first; but the report, doubtless, multiplied his anxieties. During the night of the 3d, General Sedgwick had sent back his wounded to Fredericksburg, but the occupation of the heights by Early and Barksdale, on the morning of the 4th, had cut off all communication in that direction with General Gibbon, and compelled him to look to Bank's ford for the only avenue of retreat, should he be compelled to withdraw across the river. As soon as Wilcox had withdrawn his brigade from the defence of Bank's ford, which he did early on the morning of the 3d, General Benham, of the Union force, who was in command on the opposite bank, at once laid a pontoon bridge, and threw across a force for its protection, thus opening communication with General Sedgwick, and affording him an open way to the north bank. The form which Sedgwick's line had finally assumed was that of three sides of a square. The left of his line rested on the river, or rather commanded the approaches to it, commencing midway between Bank's ford and Fredericksburg, and extending along the heights facing the latter place, till it crossed the plank road, when it turned to the right, and for a mile continued on a line parallel to that highway, when it again turned to the right and occupied the position assumed in front of Salem church, extending to the right until it again covered the approaches to the river. A line of such length was necessarily attenuated, but advantage was taken of the ground, and Colonel Tompkins, chief of artillery, had posted his guns so as to protect the weak points.

Lee arrived on the field at a little before midday, and began to make his dispositions for attack. McLaws, with the brigades of Anderson which were with him, was allowed to remain substantially in the position he was in during the previous night, while Anderson was pushed forward so as to face the part of Sedgwick's line parallel

to the plank road, and Early was brought up to confront the left of the Union line stretching forward to the river. The plan of attack as finally adopted by General Lee was for McLaws to hold his position, while Anderson and Early moved upon the Union left and rear. It is marvellous that Lee, with such a force as he had in hand, should have been so dilatory in making his decisions, and in opening the battle, and his sluggishness can only be accounted for upon the supposition that he had hope that Sedgwick would take the initiative, or what is more probable, that he had already had about all the fighting that his troops wanted, and that he was only anxious to get Sedgwick across the river with as little exposure of his men and consequent loss as possible.

Sedgwick, on his part, felt the precariousness of his situation; but he had put his corps in a good position, and had partially intrenched it, and had he even been earlier attacked would have made a good fight. General Warren, Chief Engineer officer of the army, had been with Sedgwick from the commencement of the march, and remained with the column until the close of the fighting before Salem church, on the evening of the 3d. He then crossed on the bridge which had been laid by General Benham at Bank's ford, and returned by United States ford to General Hooker's headquarters, near Chancellorsville, which he reached at 11 o'clock P. M. After full conference with the commanding general, and learning that the army was now in position to court an attack from the enemy, and no longer to need the assistance of Sedgwick, Warren sent the following telegram at midnight to Sedgwick:\* "I find everything snug here. We contracted the line a little and repulsed the last assault with ease. General Hooker wishes them to attack him to-morrow, if they will. He does not desire you to attack again in force, unless he attacks him at the same time. He says you are too far away for him to direct. Look well to the safety of your corps, and keep up communication with General Benham at Bank's ford and Fredericksburg. You can go to either place if you think best. To cross at Bank's ford would bring you in supporting distance of the main body, and would be better than falling back to Fredericksburg."

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\* General Warren's official report, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 60.

This dispatch\* was not received by General Sedgwick until the forenoon of the 4th was well advanced, owing to the circuitous course it had to take, and not until after a pressure was beginning to be felt on both his flanks, and upon his proper front. To retire to Fredericksburg was out of the question, and to withdraw from the presence of the enemy in any direction, in the temper in which they then were, vigilant and ready to seize every advantage, was equally impracticable. At about the time this message was received, General Howe was attacked by a force advancing from the direction of Fredericksburg, evidently with the design of feeling the way to Bank's ford, or to give Sedgwick notice that he had better cross. But the demonstration was feeble, and was readily repulsed, and a battle-flag and some two hundred prisoners were taken. Fifteen minutes after the receipt of this telegram Sedgwick replied: "The enemy threaten me strongly on two fronts. My position is bad for such attack. It was assumed for attack and not defence. It is not improbable that the bridges at Bank's ford may be sacrificed. Can you help me strongly if I am attacked? My bridges are two miles from me. I am compelled to cover them above and below from attack, with the additional assistance of General Benham's brigade alone."† This, it must be confessed, was not in a very hopeful strain, and the intimation that he might be compelled to give up Bank's ford discloses his desire to be ordered to recross there: for what could he hope if Bank's ford was taken from him? He had previously been telegraphing to General Hooker substantially in the same strain, one message at nine in the morning, and another at eleven, about the hour that he received the one from Warren, and

\* The form of this dispatch, as given in General Sedgwick's report, differs materially from the one above quoted. It seems that the following form was the one first sent, for General Sedgwick says, "General Warren left me at 12 o'clock on the night of May 3, to go to Chancellorsville, and immediately upon reaching Chancellorsville wrote me this dispatch, 'I have reported your situation to General Hooker. I find that we contracted our lines here somewhat during the morning, and repulsed the enemy's last assault with ease. The troops are in good position. General Hooker says you are separated from him so far that he cannot advise you how to act. You need not try to force the position you attacked at 5 P. M. Look to the safety of your corps. You can retire, if necessary, by way of Fredericksburg or Bank's ford; the latter would enable you to join us more readily.'" General Sedgwick's official report, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 97.

† Sedgwick's testimony, "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 99.

at a quarter past one in the afternoon he sent the following: \* "I occupy the same position as yesterday, when General Warren left me. I know of no means of knowing the enemy's force about me; deserters say 40,000. I shall take a position near Bank's ford, and near the Taylor house, at the suggestion of General Warren. Officers have already gone to select a position. It is believed that the heights of Fredericksburg are occupied by two divisions of the enemy. I shall do my utmost to hold a position on the right bank of the Rappahannock until to-morrow." The tone of this is no less despondent than the others, and in the disposition to make large estimate of the forces opposed to him, is disclosed his strong anxiety to retire. It was a great misfortune that these dispatches were so long in reaching their destination, varying from five to eleven hours, and it is not improbable that they were all taken off by the enemy. General Hooker was very desirous of maintaining a foothold at Bank's ford, and, fearing that Sedgwick would unnecessarily yield it, at 11 in the morning of May 4, sent the following: "The major-general commanding desires me to say that he does not wish you to cross at Bank's ford unless you are compelled to do so. The batteries at Bank's ford protect the position. If it is practicable for you to maintain a position on the south side of the Rappahannock, near Bank's ford, do so. It is very important that we should occupy the position at Bank's ford; General Tyler commands the batteries there." To emphasize his desire, a half hour later, he said: "If the necessary information can be obtained to-day, and if it shall be of the character the commanding general anticipates, it is his intention to advance upon the enemy to-morrow. In this event the position of your corps on the south bank of the Rappahannock will be as favorable as the general could desire. It is for this reason that he desires that your corps should not cross the Rappahannock." But when these messages went, General Hooker had not received the lugubrious ones of Sedgwick; when, however, these came, seeing that there was little hope of the Sixth corps holding the position it was then in, he sent the following: "The commanding general directs that in the event you fall back, you reserve, if practicable, a position on the Fredericksburg side of the Rappahannock, which

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 99.

you can hold securely until to-morrow. Please let the commanding general have your opinion in regard to this by telegram from Bank's ford as soon as possible."

The day was now rapidly waning, and little was being done on this intermediate battle-ground, but telegraphing on the one side, and some moving of troops on the other. General Lee, having finally got his preparations made, at a little before sundown commenced to move. The principal attack was to be made by Early on the extreme Union right, supported by Anderson at the plank road, while McLaws was to await the action of the others, and then press forward. Notice was given to the latter when the battle was about to open, and at the sound of the guns of Early, Kershaw and Wofford went forward through the dense woods, and Colonel Alexander, who had a strong battery on a prominent hill, opened fire. General Early had opposed to him a skilful soldier—General Howe, not easily frightened, and the manner of the fight is best told in his own words. "Our advance on the Chancellorsville road had been checked; a night had passed, and time had been given for the enemy to make movements advantageous to him, and I was fully satisfied that a strong effort would be made to cut the Sixth corps off from the river. About 5 o'clock P. M. an attack was made upon my division from the Fredericksburg heights, on Marye's heights. My line, as I then occupied it, was nearly two miles in length, the left extending to the Rappahannock, and my right resting near what is known as Guest's house. I had less than 6,000 men on that line. The attack was made by three divisions of the enemy, delivered with a violence that I had never before encountered. I had made arrangements to occupy two positions, the first to check them until their point of attack was developed, and the other, a stronger position, to be occupied afterwards. The troops with me understood the points to be occupied after the first dash. We resisted the first attack better than I expected, and our own loss was less than I had supposed it would be, and at a favorable time the left of my line was thrown back, partially behind some woods. As I expected, the enemy seemed to be under the impression, from this movement, that we were giving way. They rallied and advanced, moving well towards the river, until they reached a point that we could have de-



sired above all others they should have advanced upon, and where a reserve force which I had placed under cover had an opportunity to get a flank fire upon them with full effect. When the fire from our new position struck them, it was but a short time before they were entirely broken, and fell back in a rout. It was near dark when we had completely repulsed them."

It is somewhat amusing to notice the very delicate colors with which General Early, from the opposite side, draws the same occurrences. \* "Subsequently," he says, "I was sent for by General Lee, and having received his instructions, at the signal agreed on, Hays', Hoke's, and Gordon's brigades, which had been placed in position, were advanced against the enemy, Hays advancing in the centre, from the foot of the hill opposite the mill and Hazel run; Hoke on the left, advancing across the hill on which Downman's house is situated, and below it; and Gordon on the right up the hills on the north of the plank road, driving the enemy before them. This movement was commenced very late, and Hays' and Hoke's brigades were thrown into some confusion by coming in contact after they crossed the plank road, below Guest's house, and it becoming difficult to distinguish our troops from those of the enemy on account of the growing darkness, they had therefore to fall back to re-form, which was done on the plain below Guest's house."

But wherefore fall back to re-form if the trouble simply resulted from the two brigades coming in contact? The question naturally arises, Has not the General made a slight mistake in this, and instead of two brigades of his own troops coming in contact with each other, did not the Louisiana Tigers, for such were the troops engaged, encounter the troops of Howe, and get terribly punished? In his official report General Early says that he lost 136 killed, 838 wounded, and 500 missing, exclusive of Barksdale's brigade and the artillery. The question arises where were so many lost, if not here, as little severe fighting was done by him except at this point.

As had been agreed on, there was an advance by the rebel forces all along the line, as soon as the guns of Early were heard; but on many parts the ground was difficult, and one portion of the line had to wait upon another, and night coming on the pressure was nowhere else very persistent or effective.

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\* General Stuart's official report, "Reb. Rec.," Vol. X., p. 268.

In conformity with the last order from General Hooker, directing him to occupy a more contracted line on the south bank of the river, if he found it inadvisable to remain in the position he was in on the 4th, as soon as darkness had fairly settled upon the field, General Sedgwick began to draw in his lines. Newton and Brooks went first, thus uncovering the right of Howe without proper notification to that officer that such a movement was in progress, and leaving him in a precarious situation. But the enemy took no advantage of their opportunity, and the withdrawal was made without serious molestation. Soon after he had got his troops in upon the new and contracted position around Bank's ford, General Sedgwick sent the following telegram, which was dated at the ford, May 4th, 11.45 P. M., to General Hooker: "My army is hemmed in upon the slope covered by the guns from the north side of Bank's ford. If I had only this army to care for I would withdraw it to-night. Do your operations require that I should jeopard by retaining it here? An immediate answer is indispensable. I may [unintelligible] to withdraw." This message was received at 1 A. M. of the 5th, and plainly indicated that Sedgwick was getting very nervous. Whereupon General Hooker telegraphed him at 1 o'clock A. M. of the 5th: "Dispatch this moment received. Withdraw; cover the river and prevent any force crossing. Acknowledge receipt." This was joyful intelligence to Sedgwick, and he immediately commenced the movement over the river. But previous to receiving this order he had sent a message, the exact date of which is not given, but probably some time before midnight, in response to the one above given from General Hooker, urging his retention of ground upon the south bank of the river, in these words: "I shall hold my position, as ordered, on south side of Rappahannock." This was not received by General Hooker until 1.20 A. M. on the 5th, just twenty minutes after he had sent the order to cross. Whereupon Hooker immediately telegraphed: "Yours received 1 A. M. saying you should hold position. Order to withdraw countermanded. Acknowledge both." But it seems that the order to withdraw travelled faster than the order to remain, the order to remain not reaching its destination till twenty minutes past three on the morning of the 5th. By that time the crossing had been nearly completed, and to return

then was impossible. The movement across the river was anticipated by the enemy, and they were on the alert. As soon as the noise of crossing was detected, they commenced dropping shells, from batteries advantageously posted, upon the bridge and its approaches, where the troops, in dense columns, were assembling and passing. This fire proved very annoying. By morning, however, the corps, with all its material, was across, the tangle of telegrams was cut short, and the fighting was at an end.

But two courses were now open to General Hooker in his new position near Chancellorsville; either to assume the offensive, inasmuch as the enemy could not be induced to attack, and endeavor to break through the enemy's position confronting his own, or to retire across the river and form new combinations. To attack the enemy from the position in which he then was would be attended with many difficulties, and with only moderate prospect of success. His army was in the midst of the Wilderness, with few roads over which artillery could be moved. Reconnoissances fully demonstrated that the enemy had all these avenues thoroughly cut off by elaborate works, amply covered with artillery, against which it would be certain destruction to advance by direct approach. To advance through the tangled undergrowth, which rose like a sea far and wide, was next to impossible, and would of necessity have to be made by slender columns, against which the enemy would be enabled to fight from behind well-constructed breastworks, where a small force could successfully match a much larger one. When the army started on this campaign the men took with them but eight days rations. The theory of the campaign was that something decisive would be effected before the expiration of that time. Seven days had already elapsed, and owing to circumstances which the commanding general could not foresee nor provide against, nothing had been effected by either side to prevent the other from wishing an attack. They simply stood there facing each other in intrenched positions, from a half mile to a mile apart, and had stood so for two and a half days, attempting nothing beyond powerful reconnoissances to try each other's positions and strength.

General Hooker felt that to advance upon these intrenchments would be the Burnside-Fredericksburg problem over again, and

even worse; for there the open ground gave the utmost freedom for manœuvring troops. Besides a treacherous stream was behind him, that in a few hours could be flooded by the spring rains, which were even now threatening, and might carry away his frail bridges, his only avenue to the north bank. Should his communications be interrupted, with his rations nearly exhausted, the safety of his army might seriously be compromised. In view of his instructions to cover Washington, and of President Lincoln's emphasized advice, in his letter giving him command of the army: "Beware of rashness—beware of rashness," it was General Hooker's decided conviction, that the wisest course to pursue was to withdraw his army from its present position, and to make entirely new combinations for another campaign, rather than to trust to the fortunes of battle with the odds so strongly against him. He laid the matter before his corps commanders, with a statement of his instructions, and sought their counsel. There was some difference of opinion among them, General Meade holding that the enemy would not permit a withdrawal, and General Howard voting to remain and try to give battle, that an opportunity might be given for redeeming the mishaps in the previous fighting; but all substantially agreeing that a retrograde movement should be made if it could be safely effected. The order was accordingly issued on the morning of the 5th, to make preparations to withdraw. As a precautionary measure, General Warren and Captain Comstock were directed to lay out a new and contracted line, covering the approaches to the bridges, and new and direct roads were opened from the position of the different corps to the ford. "A continuous cover and abatis was constructed," says General Warren, "from the Rappahannock, at Scott's dam, around to the mouth of Hunting run, or the Rapidan, a distance of three miles. The roads were also put in order, and a third bridge laid." But no troops occupied this new line, except the rear guard, which was not until daylight of the 6th, when the passage of the river was nearly completed.

It was not until twenty-four hours after the decision had been made to re-cross, that the movement was fairly inaugurated, and nearly the same time had elapsed since Sedgwick had commenced to re-cross at Bank's ford. The whole day of the 5th, from dawn to

darkness, had been given the rebel army to concentrate and attack General Hooker, had its commander been so disposed. The force which had been confronting Sedgwick could easily have come up in two or three hours, and a fifteen minutes ride would have brought General Lee to General Hooker's front.

At half-past seven P. M. on the 5th, the Union army began to re-cross the river. Scarcely had the artillery commenced to move, when a sudden rise in the river, from the storm which had for several hours, since half-past four, been prevailing, interrupted the passage, the ends of the bridges on the north bank being submerged, and the strength of the current threatening to sweep all away. It was indeed a fearful night, the rushing of the waters, the pitchy darkness, and the ceaseless descent of the rain, combining to make it a dreary march. But Captain Comstock was equal to the emergency, and taking up his upper bridge and using it to piece out his other two, he finally had them passable and the retirement was resumed. General Meade, who was charged with covering the movement, brought his rear guard into the new line at a little after daylight, and by eight in the morning of the 6th, the last of the army was across without the loss of men or material or the firing of a gun, the enemy refusing to follow or to attempt the interruption of the progress. Thus was ended eight eventful days in the life of the Army of the Potomac.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CONDUCT OF THE BATTLE.



**A**BOUT none of the great battles of the late war does there exist so much misapprehension as about Chancellorsville. As this was one of those engagements respecting which a committee of the National Congress made a very elaborate and exhaustive inquiry, and has been more written about, and illustrated by the best topographical skill, on the part of both the contending parties, than any other, it would naturally be inferred, that the great salient features, the rationale of the fight would be well understood. But the inferences, drawn by the leading writers, upon the management of this battle, have been founded upon statements and opinions given under a misunderstanding, or partial view of the facts. Many of these opinions have been given with entire honesty, by soldiers of great eminence and strict probity, who would, under no considerations, have conveyed a wrongful impression had they known it to be such; but who have misled by having based their statements on a partial knowledge of the case.

The plans of General Hooker, for getting his army across the deep and rapid stream behind which his antagonist had taken post, and had for long distances opposed, at almost every possible point of crossing, intrenched camps vigilantly guarded, were laid with unquestioned skill, and executed with a completeness and a success scarcely paralleled in the annals of warfare. A condition which most powerfully contributed to the success of his movements was the ever watchful care with which he kept his counsels.

The conditions imposed upon General Hooker in planning and executing this part of his campaign are concisely stated by the eminent English soldier and critic, Colonel MacDougall, in his chapter on the passage of rivers, in his admirable work on "Modern Warfare," already referred to. "The part of the stream," he says, "which appears to have been specially guarded by the Confederates, extended from United States ford, at the junction of the Rapidan with the Rappahannock, that is to say about twelve miles above Fredericksburg, to Port Royal, about twenty miles below. General Anderson guarded the United States ford with two brigades. Jackson's corps seems to have been posted in observation on the river from Port Royal to Fredericksburg. The main force of Confederates was on the heights overlooking the town, which had been the scene of their easy victory over General Burnside. Their position was formed by an amphitheatre of hills surrounding Fredericksburg, resting on the river above and below the town, but leaving between their foot and the river a plain about seven miles long, and one mile and a half wide. The crest of the hills was thickly studded with Confederate batteries, whose converging fire crossed over the plain in their front, and the problem which Hooker had to solve was, to cross the Rappahannock and advance on Richmond without being obliged to assault this formidable position, and at the same time without unduly exposing his own line of retreat. Although his plan had long been matured, and for many days only awaited favorable weather for its execution, he seems to have taken no person into his confidence. In general terms his measures were calculated to induce Lee to concentrate in the Fredericksburg position by a cunningly devised demonstration in that quarter, while he intended to pass the mass of his army over the river at Kelly's ford, twenty-seven miles up stream, and to place it in such a position as should threaten the enemy's communications with Richmond, and would so compel Lee either to retreat upon that city, or to march to attack the Northern army in a chosen position prepared for defence. It was at the same time a necessary condition that the Confederates should not be able to intercept the communication between that position and Washington, without leaving open the road to Richmond." After rapidly sketching the movements of

Hooker to execute this grand design, MacDougall adds, "Hooker's arrangements had so far been crowned with complete success. His artifices had kept Lee's army in mass behind Fredericksburg, their eyes anxiously turned towards the northeast, while he placed four *corps d'armee*, numbering at least 70,000 men, on the left rear of the latter, threatening their communication with Richmond. At the same time Sedgwick and Reynolds, below Fredericksburg, were in readiness to cross the river and act against the army of General Lee, supposing the latter to move against Hooker. There is no doubt Lee was taken entirely by surprise by the apparition of Hooker at Chancellorsville." Even more complimentary is the language of our own eminent war critic: "If Hooker had been killed," he says, "making a reconnoissance, on the morning of Friday, May 1, 1863, in the same way that a twin spirit, Kearny, lost his life, in the performance of a like imperative duty on the evening of September 1, 1862—had Hooker, we say, fallen while riding forward to investigate for himself the field on which he was about to act—as he had done a year previous, shortly after day-break, Monday, 5th of May, 1862, before his first great fight at Williamsburg, his successful crossing of the Rappahannock, and complete out-generalling of Lee, taken in connection with his previous record as a first-class fighter and a wonderful organizer, would have justified the country in claiming that it had produced a great commander; one who had shown himself worthy to rank among the few great captains competent to make, and make use of, an army of over one hundred thousand men. And the nation would have been justified in boasting, that an untimely but glorious death had cut short the career of one of those rare great captains, whose brilliant inner lights were worthy his magnificent presence on the battle-field; a presence replete with grace and grandeur, unexceeded and very rarely equalled."

The general officers commanding in General Hooker's army are unanimous in awarding the highest praise to this transfer of the army across the river, and to the rear of the enemy. Even those criticising most severely other parts of the campaign freely acknowledge this to rank among the finest examples of its class in the history of military operations. General Humphreys, a soldier



of keen insight, and large attainments in military science in addition to his unsurpassed valor as a field marshal, says of it: "This expedition, so far as moving to Chancellorsville, was admirably planned. It was an expedition in which up to that point was accomplished everything we could have desired. We surprised the enemy completely, and crossed the river without their knowing anything about it apparently. It was admirably planned, so far as that was concerned, and admirably executed." Thus, by the testimony of foreign critics and our own ablest soldiers, this operation, conceived at the outset to be the most difficult of solution, was accomplished with entire success, and will forever link the name of its author with the renowned captains of the world.

The conduct of the campaign, after the head of General Hooker's column had reached Chancellorsville, has been the subject of much sharp criticism and free comment, which must now claim careful examination. It has been emphatically maintained that the three corps which first arrived at Chancellorsville should not have paused, but should have pushed on five or six miles further towards Fredericksburg, and taken position on the high ground, uncovering and commanding Bank's ford. That, indeed, was a consummation devoutly to be wished. But let us see what the possibilities were for its accomplishment. It will be remembered that the Twelfth, Eleventh and Fifth corps marched on the 28th of April, crossed the Rappahannock and Rapidan, and bivouacked on the night of the 29th, on the right bank of the latter stream. General Hooker accompanied the column to the fords of the Rappahannock, where it was to cross, and on taking leave of it, placed General Slocum, of the Twelfth, in command of the three corps, and bade him lose no time till he had crossed the streams and uncovered United States ford. He was then to push on to Chancellorsville, and, if he found on arriving there, and making a strong reconnoissance with his cavalry, that the probabilities were that troops had not been detached from behind Fredericksburg to oppose his advance, and he could do so without encountering too considerable a force for him to master, he was to push forward at all hazards, and uncover Bank's ford. It will thus be seen that General Hooker strongly desired that this advance should be made, and emphatically ordered

it, provided that there was any fair prospect of success. At daylight on the morning of the 30th, General Slocum says that he moved from Germania ford, and at the same hour General Meade started from Ely's ford, Sykes' division, led by the First squadron of the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry, taking the United States ford road, and arrived at Chancellorsville, the Twelfth corps at 2 P. M. of the same day, and the Fifth corps somewhat earlier. A detachment of cavalry had been sent forward early in the morning, and had taken a few prisoners, and later in the morning the cavalry had been heavily engaged with rebel infantry sent out from Fredericksburg, to oppose the Union advance, and had been driven back with considerable loss. General Anderson, of the rebel army, in describing this encounter in his report, says: "Wright's and Posey's brigades retired [at daylight] from Chancellorsville by the plank road, and Mahone's by the old turnpike. Whilst they were moving off, and before the pickets had been called in, the cavalry of the enemy, under cover of a fog and rain, dashed upon the pickets on the Ely's ford road, and captured a part of one company. They subsequently attacked the rear guard of Mahone's brigade, but were so effectually repulsed that we were no further annoyed by them during the movement." Accordingly, Slocum, on arriving at Chancellorsville at 2 P. M., and finding that the rebel infantry in force had so roughly handled his cavalry, and learning that the division of Sykes had been thrown forward until confronted by a superior force behind breastworks, taking this to be sufficient evidence of the presence on his front of a considerable force from the intrenchments before Fredericksburg, decided not to attempt an advance to Bank's ford, and at once took up a position before Chancellorsville, and began to fortify. General Slocum, it will thus be seen, obeyed the letter and the spirit of his instructions. Ought he to have acted differently? Something was left to his discretion. Could he judiciously have hazarded more? The fact that this wing of the army had for three days been making forced marches with heavy burdens, and had crossed two large and difficult streams, and all this at a season of the year when exhaustion is most easily induced, need not be considered; for if a great advantage was to be gained, that army without a murmur, though fainting by the way, would have marched

five miles further, and fought, had there been need, to have gained the coveted position. Now, had they marched on without stopping at Chancellorsville, could they have uncovered Bank's ford and held the position? Let us understand the exact facts.

General Anderson, who had been sent out by General Lee from Fredericksburg during the night of the 29th, with Wright's brigade to meet the brigades of Posey and Mahone retiring from United States ford, and, with the united force, to check the advance of Slocum, had decided, upon his arrival at Chancellorsville, not to make a stand there, but to countermarch to the elevated ground by the Hopewell nurseries, where he could make a stout defence, hold and cover Bank's ford from troops advancing from Chancellorsville, and preserve a position where he could quickly be reinforced from Fredericksburg. Arriving at that point—the neighborhood of the Tabernacle church—early on the morning of the 30th, he was met by the chief engineers of Lee's army, who immediately proceeded to lay out a line of defence, and during the entire day, though fatigued by a long march, Anderson's men worked diligently in intrenching. What, therefore, would have been the consequence had Slocum, with these three corps, gone forward without stopping at Chancellorsville? He would have marched on over these five weary miles, and, as he was emerging at near nightfall from the unbroken forests through which the roads pass, and across which the enemy had built their works, would have encountered a powerful force, well disposed behind intrenchments, with artillery trained to sweep all the approaches, and would, in all probability, had he made a determined attack, suffered a disastrous and bloody repulse, finding, when too late, that he could neither gain the crests and open ground in his front, nor uncover Bank's ford. We conclude, therefore, that Slocum fully obeyed his instructions in stopping at Chancellorsville, and that it was most fortunate that he did not transcend those instructions by a too liberal interpretation, and attempt to march on.

General Hooker remained at his headquarters at Falmouth, until the three corps under Slocum had arrived and taken position at Chancellorsville. On the afternoon of their arrival, Hooker proceeded to the latter place, and assumed command, reaching there be-

tween five and six o'clock of the 30th, simultaneously with the approach of the Second corps. Captain Wickersham's squadron of the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry picketed during the night in front of Chancellorsville, and early on the morning of the 1st of May was attacked by the enemy's infantry, but gallantly held his own, until the remainder of the regiment arrived. Spirited charges were made, and the enemy were unable to advance beyond the edge of the woods which they occupied, although they made several strong attempts to do so, the cavalry suffering severely in the skirmish. On the pike, General Warren had ridden out some three miles without encountering any enemy. Believing that no considerable force was on his immediate front, and anxious to get his army out of the Wilderness where it now stood, and especially desirous of opening Bank's ford, General Hooker determined to advance and force his way, along the several roads leading towards Fredericksburg, to the more open ground, where he could manœuvre his army. At 11 o'clock A. M. the movement commenced; but after advancing a short distance his centre was heavily engaged, and at the same time his right flank was being turned, while he was still upon the narrow roads leading through the dense wood, where he could neither use his artillery, nor form his infantry. He accordingly determined to regain his position of the morning, which had been partially intrenched, and where he had some chance to meet his antagonist on equal terms. This decision of General Hooker, and consequent change of position, has been condemned, and the opinion has been expressed that the army should have pushed forward, and fought the enemy there. It is asserted that the several columns of the Union army had arrived at, or had come close in upon the position which General Hooker had designated to be taken, that they had advanced until the coveted ground was within their grasp, and easily attainable, when they were drawn back to the inferior position about Chancellorsville. Let us examine these statements and see if they are tenable; for, if they are, General Hooker was certainly guilty of a great military sin.

When General Hooker gave the order to advance on the morning of the 1st, he undoubtedly believed that there was no such force of the enemy between Chancellorsville and Bank's ford, as would stop

his onward progress. At the moment when he took his decision there really was no force between himself and the rebel intrenchments at the junction of the plank road and the pike. But at daylight on the morning of that day the whole rebel army was in motion, and before the movement of Hooker had commenced, the whole aspect of the case was changed.

To understand exactly the situation, the distances between the two armies must be considered, the progress which each had made when they encountered, and the situation in which General Hooker found himself at the moment of collision, before we can decide whether the manœuvre was a blunder or a mark of military skill. From Chancellorsville to Tabernacle church, which General Hooker had designated as the point where his headquarters were to be established, is five and one-sixteenth miles by the plank road, on which Slocum with the Twelfth corps, followed by the Eleventh, was to advance; by the pike, on which Sykes of the Fifth corps, followed by Hancock of the Second, was to move, is four and one-eighth miles. From Chancellorsville to Bank's ford, which was the objective, or to a point intermediate between Mott and Colin runs, which was designated in the order of General Hooker, and which is substantially the same, by the river road, on which Griffin followed by Humphreys of the Fifth corps was to move, is seven and three-eighths miles. By the reports of the officers named above it appears that the movement of the several columns commenced at 11 o'clock A. M.

What was the position and ordering of the rebel army at the moment that these corps of the Union army were commencing this advance? Anderson's division was intrenched on commanding ground about half way between Tabernacle church and Hopewell nursery, near the junction of the pike and plank roads, extending from the bed of the abandoned railroad, to Bank's ford, which it covered. At midnight of the 30th, General McLaws was ordered up to the support of Anderson, and at daylight of the 1st General Jackson was ordered to follow with the balance of the army, save a few regiments left to hold the fortifications about Fredericksburg under General Early. McLaws reached the breastworks of Anderson before dawn, and fell to fortifying, carrying the works around

to the Rappahannock between Mott and Colin runs. General Jackson arrived at the intrenchments at 8 A. M., and gave orders to stop fortifying and to advance. At 11 o'clock, the very moment that General Hooker's columns commenced moving from Chancellorsville, the whole rebel army, under the immediate command of Generals Lee and Jackson, moved out from their admirably chosen and intrenched position, under cover of which it could retire as to a fortress, if obliged to fall back, and pushed forward by the plank, the pike, and the Old Mine roads, while a fourth column moved by the bed of the unfinished railway. We thus have the two contending armies starting out at the same hour of the morning, from two positions that by the shortest road were a little over four miles apart, and by the longest something less than eight miles. As General Jackson gave the order to advance at 8 o'clock in the morning, it is probable that the rebel skirmish line marched a little earlier. Where, then, would the clash be likely to occur? General Slocum in his official report says: "On Friday, at 11 A. M., pursuant to orders, I moved the Twelfth corps from Chancellorsville towards Fredericksburg on the plank road. We met the skirmishers of the enemy about a mile from the Chancellorsville house, formed in line of battle and advanced, the enemy falling back towards the heights of Fredericksburg." General Williams, who commanded the First division of Slocum's corps, says: "Notwithstanding the density of the underbrush and evergreen thickets, the division moved rapidly to the front, driving before them the pickets of the enemy. During the most of the advance we were under artillery fire, which, however, inflicted no injury. I had crossed some open fields, perhaps two miles in advance of Chancellorsville, to a point where a sight was first obtained of the enemy's intrenchments and rifle pits, and had halted Knipe's brigade to establish my line, and put the reserve brigade in position. My skirmishers were sharply engaged with those of the enemy, and the troops seemed never so eager to engage, when an order was received to return to my original position." . . . From the statements of both Slocum and Williams it would seem that the rebel advance had started earlier than 11 o'clock, for the rebel skirmishers were met almost immediately on leaving Chancellorsville, and Slocum's column was

under artillery fire nearly the whole way. Williams estimates that he had gone two miles, and had crossed some open fields, when he came in sight of the enemy's intrenchments and rifle-pits. What intrenchments and rifle-pits? Not the works beyond the Hopewell nursery, for they were five miles out by the road he was following; but the position which Jackson's forces had taken up and hastily fortified for a fight. On the pike or middle road, Sykes' division of the Fifth corps had the advance, closely followed by Hancock's division of the Second corps, and met the enemy at once. General Hancock says: "General Sykes met the enemy immediately on leaving Chancellorsville, and forced him back about two miles. According to the order of the day, the headquarters of General Hooker that night were to have been at a point on the Fredericksburg road some distance in advance of the point at which General Sykes' advance had arrived, the distance from Chancellorsville being about ten miles. General Sykes was subsequently forced back some distance." Sykes deployed his column, and used Weed's battery with good effect; but he found himself outflanked on either hand, and vastly outnumbered, and was unable to form connection with either of the other advancing columns. His furthest advance was only about two miles, and, from his being on the direct road, got, in an easterly direction, further than either of the columns on his flanks. It was something over four miles by the way on which he was moving to Tabernacle church, the position which he was expected to reach. Sykes, therefore, in his most advanced point, had only reached two miles, half of the distance he was to go, and from even that was forced back. But General Warren says: "When we had advanced about a mile and a half, we found the enemy advancing and driving in our cavalry. General Sykes moved forward at double quick, and drove the enemy back and gained the position that had been assigned him." What position assigned him? Not the one at Tabernacle church, for he was still two miles away from it, and the enemy since 11 o'clock had pushed forward from his intrenchments, which were a considerable distance on the Chancellorsville side of Tabernacle church. What therefore General Warren characterizes "as the position assigned him" (Sykes) was considerably less than half way there, and in the position he did gain found

himself cut off from the other columns, hard pressed, and actually forced back.

What of the column advancing on the river road? It moved simultaneously with the others, and received the order to return at the same time that they did. From not meeting any considerable opposition, it may have gone over more distance than the others. But it was seven and three-eighths miles to Bank's ford. Meade, who had the divisions of Griffin and Humphreys on this road, may have gone a little beyond the point where the Old Mountain road debouches into the river road; for Wilcox's rebel brigade advancing on the road leading from Alsop's on the pike, past Daverson's mill on Mott run, made prisoners of three stragglers from Meade's corps near this point. General Humphreys says: "I followed closely on the first division, and, as I understand, we had nearly approached the place, were within a mile or two of the position that we were to take, when General Meade received an order countermanding the one under which we had been acting, and we were immediately brought back to Chancellorsville." General Hancock, basing his opinion on this statement of General Humphreys, it may be, says in his testimony: "General Meade had approached Bank's ford, and had practically opened it; that is, he had met no enemy and had got close to it." Now what are the facts? In the first place is it supposable that in the time intervening between the hour of starting and that of receiving the command to return, the column had time to march seven and three-eighths miles? In the second place the enemy left a force to guard Bank's ford, and to hold the intrenchments which covered the ford, and Meade had no encounter with this guard; for all the testimony is agreed that Meade met no determined opposition. Besides, General Humphreys, who was of this column, simply says: "And, as *I understand*, we had nearly approached the place, *were within a mile or two of the position* that we were to take." This language it will be observed is very indefinite. It will thus be seen that the idea that Bank's ford was ever uncovered was a misapprehension. On the contrary we know positively that Bank's ford was held by the enemy, who were undisturbed.

It is thus clearly established that the idea that General Williams



had come on the plank road within sight of the position assigned him, that Sykes on the pike had reached his position, and that Meade had practically uncovered Bank's ford is entirely erroneous.

Every author who has written upon this battle has founded his statements upon the testimony of these officers, and has represented General Hooker as having marched out, and, after having nearly gained the position which he desired, suddenly and unaccountably abandoned it, and retired to Chancellorsville. But the fact is General Hooker had his three columns in motion on three roads leading through an impenetrable forest, ways which he himself likens to causeways, and forest which General Warren says it was impossible to penetrate without trailing arms, and while his corps were stretched out on these narrow causeways, and before the heads of the column had reached half the distance assigned them to go, they were met by the whole rebel army, drawn up on ground of its own choice in solid line, with breastworks thrown up and artillery advantageously posted. Would General Hooker have been justified in attempting to hold his ground on such unequal terms? Would any man, knowing all the facts which have been adduced, maintain that General Hooker should have held his ground and attempted to advance? What would have been the consequence had General Hooker continued to push forward? General Meade would have been cut off on the river road by the rebel column advancing on the Old Mountain or Mine road; Sykes would have found himself unable to cope with the rebel centre, and would have been pushed back still further than he was; and Slocum would have been overborne by the force on his front, and by the flanking column moving down rapidly on the unfinished Orange railroad. It was, therefore, a movement dictated by the highest military policy, for General Hooker to call in his diverging and unsupported columns, and place them behind the intrenchments which he had but just left, on ground where he could concentrate and properly manœuvre his army.

It should here be observed that when the officers whose testimony has been adduced above gave their opinions, the reports of rebel officers had not been given to the public, nor maps made illustrating the intrenched rebel positions and the ground occupied.

This is not the first instance in the progress of warfare that the contingencies of the field have induced a commander, and that wisely, to change his tactics, when, by so doing, he could improve his position and prospects. General Rosecrans at Stone river had planned to strike Bragg's right, and, doubling it up, sweep up the centre, and cut off his way of retreat. But Bragg on his side had planned to strike the right of Rosecrans in precisely the same way. Bragg got his blow in first, and Rosecrans was obliged to relinquish his plan and parry as best he could the telling assaults of his antagonist. The Duke of Wellington is reported to have said in reply to an inquiry as to what his secret was for winning battles, that he had no secret, that he did not know how to win battles, and that no man knew. All that man could do was to look beforehand steadily at all the chances, and lay all possible plans beforehand; but from the moment the battle begun, no mortal prudence was of use, and no mortal man could know what the end would be. A thousand new accidents might spring up every hour, and scatter all his plans to the winds; and all that man could do was to comfort himself with the thought that he had done his best, and to trust in God.

"And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure  
Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.  
For we are all like swimmers in the sea,  
Poised on the crest of a huge wave of fate,  
That hangs uncertain on which side to fall;  
And whether it will heave us up to land,  
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,  
Back out to sea to the deep waves of death,  
We know not, and no search will make us know;  
Only the event will teach us in its hour."

The position taken up by General Hooker, on returning to Chancellorsville, was substantially the same as that selected by Slocum on the previous day, though considerably extended and improved on the left, where General Humphreys examined and marked the line. This position, which the army finally settled down upon, on the afternoon of the 1st, in expectation of fighting a battle, has been characterized as a weak one. When compared with the position held by the Union army at Gettysburg, or by the rebel army at Fredericksburg, it was weak. But for this Wilderness country,

nearly a dead level, only gently rolling, and covered by an almost unbroken forest, it was as good a position as could have been found. Both Lee and Stuart regarded it as well chosen. Lee says: "Here the enemy had assumed a position of great natural strength, surrounded on all sides by a dense forest, filled with a tangled undergrowth, in the midst of which breastworks of logs had been constructed, with trees felled in front, so as to form an impenetrable abatis. His artillery swept the few narrow roads by which his position could be approached from the front, and commanded the adjacent woods." General Stuart says: "The enemy had a fine position, and if time had been given him to recover from his first surprise, and mass troops on that front, it would have been a difficult task to dislodge him." It seems, by the testimony of General Warren, that General Hooker expressed solicitude for the safety of his right wing, at the consultation of officers on the night of the 1st, and was disposed to draw it in; but so confident were the officers on that part of the line that they could hold their ground against any force which could be brought against them, that he suffered the troops to remain as they were. This solicitude is evinced by the position in which he posted General Williams' division, covering, as it did, the right flank by an interior line stretching from Hazel grove away towards United States ford, crossing the plank road a mile or more from Chancellorsville, facing the west, and protected by a breastwork of logs.

The turning movement ordered by General Hooker on the afternoon of the 2d, to be made by the way of Welford furnace, was an exceedingly important one, but has never received the attention it deserves. As soon as he discovered that a heavy column of the rebel army was moving off across his front in the direction of Gordonsville, judging this to be a vulnerable point in Lee's front, and that the rebel centre could here be pierced, he ordered Sickles to advance with two divisions of his own corps, accompanied by a force of cavalry, and subsequently strengthened the column by Williams' division of the Twelfth corps, and a brigade of the Eleventh. When Sickles had succeeded in penetrating the enemy's line, which he successfully accomplished, and had brought in a regiment of Georgia troops as prisoners, Williams, with his fine division, was to turn the left of Lee's severed army, and wheeling upon his flank, come in

upon his rear with crushing power. The effect of such a manœuvre can well be imagined, and had it been followed up vigorously on all sides, as it doubtless would have been, the rebel army would have been beaten in detail. In twenty minutes more, that movement would have been fully inaugurated, and in full tide of execution. In the hands of such an officer as Williams, directed and supported by so determined and fearless a soldier as Sickles, there can be little question but that it would have been carried to a successful issue. But Jackson delivered his blow first, and Williams, with his arm upraised, had to be instantly recalled.

The giving way of the Eleventh corps, which was the crisis of the battle, has been a subject of much comment and bitter criticism. It is quite the custom, in writing and speaking of this campaign, to glibly pronounce its failure due to the yielding of this corps, and the yielding of this corps to the cowardice of its men. But such a view is void of just discrimination, and conveys an impression utterly at variance with the facts. To one who carefully examines all the evidence, it is not difficult to fathom the exact state of the case, to understand how, and why, the corps gave way, and to fix the responsibility where it justly belongs.

Posted as the corps was along a narrow road, facing southward, with no preparation worth mentioning to meet an attack on its flank and rear, it was in no position to resist, or to speedily get into position to resist, and hence was encircled by none of the conditions fit to inspire confidence. That corps, as it there stood to receive the attack made upon it, was in the attitude of a pugilist with his hands pinioned, when about to encounter an antagonist unbound and free to act. Could any equal body of men in a similar situation have long withstood the terrible onset coming upon it like an avalanche, precipitated from an Alpine height?

It must be acknowledged, even by those most bitter in their denunciation, that a portion of this corps, and not an inconsiderable part, notwithstanding the disadvantageous position in which it was encountered, and the want of time for changing front, rushed hastily into line and made a good fight. The habit which has largely prevailed of stigmatizing the men of this corps as having been recruited in, or having come from a particular locality or state, would scarcely

be worthy of notice, were it not for the persistent misrepresentation in regard to it which has gained currency. That the facts may be fairly before us, we give the composition of the corps, except Barlow's brigade, which was absent with Sickles at the Furnace, and did not participate in the struggle. There were nine infantry regiments from the State of New York, viz.: 54th, 45th, 41st, 63d, 29th, 154th, 157th, 58th and 119th; six from Ohio, the 75th, 25th, 55th, 107th, 61st and 82d; five from Pennsylvania, the 153d, 75th, 74th, 27th and 73d; two from Connecticut, the 14th and 17th; one from Illinois, the 82d; and one from Wisconsin, the 26th; aggregating twenty-four regiments.

There is no question but that the whole plan of the battle was changed and defeated by the sudden giving way of this corps. Why did it give way? Many explanations have been made. General Hancock says: "I have no doubt that proper precautions had not been taken. I do not know who was in fault. The ground in front of General Howard, and on his right, had not been properly examined to see what was going on there, or this could not have occurred." General Warren testifies: "In the first place, I think they were attacked by a very superior force; and I have a theory of my own, that they had allowed their ambulances, and ammunition-wagons, and pack-mule train, and even beef cattle, actually to come up on their line, and as a matter of course, when the fighting began all these ran away. I know that the first drove of fugitives I saw was nothing but these ambulances and pack-mules, enough to run any man down who attempted to go in an opposite direction." General Birney says: "I think the Eleventh corps, through disregard of rules of warfare, had its pickets too close to the main body, and was surprised by the sudden massed attack of the enemy on its right flank and rear, and fled in instant confusion."

General Howard himself, in closing up his official report, adds: "Now as to the causes of this disaster to my corps: 1st. Though constantly threatened and apprised of the moving of the enemy, yet the woods were so dense that he was able to mass a large force, whose exact whereabouts neither patrols, reconnoissances, nor scouts ascertained. He succeeded in forming a column opposite to and outflanking my right. 2d. By the panic produced by the enemy's

reversed fire, regiments and artillery were thrown suddenly upon those in position. 3d. The absence of General Barlow's brigade which I had previously located in reserve, and *in echelon* with Colonel Von Gilsa's, so as to cover his right flank. This was the only general reserve I had." Finally he adds, "I feel confident that this command will yet honor itself, and the noble cause we sustain, and I ask for it another opportunity for demonstrating its true spirit."

But do any of these expositions meet the case? To answer this question we need to be satisfied whether this advent of Jackson upon the right flank was a surprise to the officers and men of the Eleventh corps. It will be remembered that General Hooker, early on the morning of the 2d, feeling a solicitude about his right flank, rode along the lines of General Slocum and General Howard, and after making some corrections in the formations, expressed himself suited with their position. But, on returning to his headquarters, he was apprised that a heavy body of infantry, artillery, and trains, could be seen passing across his front towards his right. This put an entirely different phase on the condition of his troops upon the right, and he immediately sent an order to General Howard, stating the fact that the enemy were on the march in force in that direction, and instructing him to prepare to receive them from the west, instead of the south, to examine the ground and select his positions with reference to such a contingency, to have heavy reserves well in hand, to put up artificial defences, and to advance his pickets so as to obtain timely information of their approach. There has been a baseless story in circulation, to the effect that General Howard placed this despatch in his pocket without reading it, and that he did not know the tenor of its contents until several days after the battle was over; and the fact is adduced in proof of this theory that this order was not copied into his "Letters Received" book until after orders and despatches of the 12th of June, No. 76, some six weeks afterward, had been entered. This would be a very charitable but a very senseless view to take of it. It is true that this order was not copied and made of record at the headquarters of the Eleventh corps until the date mentioned, and why it was thus withheld until a new campaign was in full tide of execution may be fairly inferred.

But the evidence in regard to the receipt of the order is well attested. The order was in fact received by General Schurz, while in temporary charge of corps headquarters, General Howard having retired to take a little rest. But General Schurz called him up and read to him the order, and while the two officers were discussing it on the porch of the Dowdall tavern, a second courier came in hot haste from General Hooker, bringing a message of the same purport as the first, thus evincing the solicitude of the general-in-chief, and the urgency of the order. "The matter was largely discussed," says General Schurz, in his official report, "at your headquarters, and I entertained and expressed in our informal conversations the opinion that we should form upon the open ground we then occupied, with our front at right angles with the plank road, lining the church grove and the border of the woods east of the open plain with infantry, placing strong *echelons* behind both wings, and distributing the artillery along the front on ground most favorable for its action, especially on the eminence on the right and left of Dowdall's tavern. In this position sweeping the open plains before us with our artillery and musketry, and checking the enemy with occasional offensive returns, we might be able to maintain ourselves, even against superior forces, at least long enough to give General Hooker time to take measures according to the exigencies of the moment." But in opposition to this careful representation of the case, exactly in accord with the order just received from General Hooker, General Howard maintained that the two regiments of General Devens sufficiently protected the flank, and added that General Hooker had inspected and approved the position of the corps, referring to the visit of the latter before knowing of the movement of the enemy past his flank.

Reconnoissances made under direction of General Schurz, by General Schemmelfennig, showed the enemy in force on the extreme right of the corps. Staff-officers were repeatedly sent to General Howard informing him that the enemy was massing on his flank. "Soon after," says General Devens in his official report, "two men, who stated that they had been sent out from another portion of the line as scouts, were brought in by my pickets, reporting that the enemy were moving in great force upon our right flank. They

were immediately sent by me to corps headquarters, under charge of a trusty sergeant, with orders that after reporting to General Howard, they should at once proceed to the headquarters of the major-general commanding the army. Several reconnoissances made by a small body of cavalry placed at my disposition discovered, early in the afternoon, bodies of the enemy's cavalry moving upon our right . . . Colonel Von Gilsa's skirmishers were, between three and four in the afternoon, attacked by the skirmishers of the enemy with the evident intention of feeling our position." The report of General Schurz is to the same purport. "It was between three and four P. M., when the section of artillery attached to Colonel Von Gilsa's brigade gave two discharges, followed by a short musketry fire. We hastened to the front and received the report that only a few rebel cavalymen had shown themselves on the old turnpike, and that the artillery had fired without orders. All became quiet again. I ordered General Schemmelfennig to push another reconnoissance up the plank road. The instructions he received from (corps) headquarters were to the effect that he should avoid everything that might bring on an engagement. The reconnoitring party returned after some time with the report that they had heard the yells and shouts of a large number of men behind the enemy's line of skirmishers. The cavalry, which had been attached to your (Howard's) command but a few days before, and whose business it was to clear up our front and flank, repeatedly reported that at some distance from our pickets they had been fired upon and that then of course they could go no further." The statement of General Schurz respecting the reconnoitring of General Schemmelfennig corroborates the testimony of Major Schleiter, adjutant of the latter general: "I nearly killed my horse in riding to inform General Howard of the fact that the enemy was massing troops on our right flank, and was received with an incredulous smile, and directed to tell General Schemmelfennig to stop reconnoitring, and remain in the position assigned to him." "About half an hour or perhaps an hour," says General Schurz, "before Jackson's attack took place, I rode with General Howard to the extreme right of our line, all the time discussing the precarious situation in which we found ourselves; but he adhered with great



confidence to his first opinion, that it was unnecessary to change our position."

Is there, then, any doubt that both General Howard and his division commanders were apprised of the gathering of the enemy on the right flank, and of the imminence of an attack from that quarter? But even supposing that they were not fully apprised of the fact of the enemy's arrival, was not the order of General Hooker of the most positive character, and did it not most explicitly declare that the corps was out of position for meeting an attack from the west, that it had no sufficient artificial protection, that the enemy were expected from that direction, and expressly command him to readjust his formation, intrench his lines, select the ground for his guns to meet an attack from that direction, and, most of all, keep his pickets and reconnoitring parties well out, so as to be fully apprised of the enemy's whereabouts and intentions? If then it was known to General Howard and his division officers that the enemy was expected, and was sure to come from the west, and more than all had been notified early in the day what they were to expect, and how they should prepare to meet it, by the general-in-chief of the army, did they make such dispositions and preparations as they were in duty bound to make?

What are the facts? In what manner were the instructions of the general-in-chief executed? In what position, and with what preparation did this corps encounter the foe? To meet the onset of Stonewall Jackson's whole army, barely two regiments were drawn up to face it. One of them, the One Hundred and Fifty-third Pennsylvania, a green regiment, enlisted for only nine months service, never in battle before, covered the greater part of that front, not in regular line of battle, but standing three feet apart more as a close line of skirmishers than a battle-line, with no artillery for shelling the woods in front, and no breastworks. On its right was the Fifty-fourth New York, standing at the head of an open field, covering but small space, and illy prepared to hold its position. Bating two pieces of an inefficiently commanded battery, standing upon the pike, which could be faced south or west as needed, this was absolutely everything prepared to meet Stonewall Jackson. The rest of the corps on the front line stood facing the south,

hemmed in between their breastworks and abatis in front, and a narrow road with fences and thickets of pine, and the *impedimenta* of the army in rear. A considerable number of regiments were in reserve, but not at all in hand, being scattered over a square mile or two of space, as will be seen by a reference to General Howard's own map. How could any corps thus disposed and hampered make a stand against a powerful foe striking it fairly in flank? The breastworks along the plank and pike were of no avail, for they faced the wrong way, while the enemy's artillery ploughed down the lines in reverse.

What then was the cause of the giving way of this corps? The fault was plainly not of the men who composed it. General Schurz avers that he realized the importance of radically changing the position of the corps, and repeatedly urged it upon General Howard; but that General Howard would allow no material change. General Schurz thereupon, on his own responsibility, ordered two of his regiments into position by the Wilderness church; but he had no sooner done so than General Howard ordered them into line again upon the front facing south, but allowed General Schurz to place two other regiments in the position he desired. But why was not General Schurz directed to put them to intrenching, and bring other of his reserve regiments into position? The ground at the church was not disadvantageous for making a good stand.

General Devens declares that he was strongly impressed by the middle of the afternoon that the attack was coming from the west, and that the corps ought to be put in a position to meet it. Why did he not then put his division in position to meet it? Why did he leave a green regiment, almost unaided and alone, disposed in little better than a skirmish line, to receive the brunt of the whole attack? He pleads in excuse that he could not have changed the position of his men without orders from his superiors. But is this the fact? Is not a division commander always at liberty to relieve and change the position of his men as he deems expedient, provided he holds the position he is directed to hold? The position at Talley's was a good one. The ground was the most commanding on that part of the field, and the enemy by their own reports were expecting obstinate resistance there. He had been some forty-eight hours

on that ground. For several hours he had known that the attack was to come from the west. He had ten regiments of infantry, a complement of artillery, and a company of cavalry at his disposal. Was there any impediment to his clearing the thickets in his front, making an abatis, throwing up a well-intrenched line, having an ample force upon it, and making a stout resistance when the onset came?

A San Francisco paper some time ago published a statement from General Howard, respecting the giving way of his corps, which has never to my knowledge been disowned, and is probably correct. He says: "It was my fault, and I will explain why. I had just been appointed to the command of the corps. There was some disaffection, some incongruous elements, and I should at once have given the command a careful inspection, made changes where necessary, and made myself thoroughly acquainted with its condition, and put it in the best possible shape as soon as I could. But I felt a delicacy in interfering with the details of my subordinates, and so deferred the matter for a day or two, and trusted entirely to them for attending to the details until I had been a few days longer in command." The first four words of this confession are unquestionably true, but the explanation of how the fault was his fails entirely to meet the case. The fact, if it was a fact, that there were incongruous elements in the corps, is entirely foreign to the question. General Howard had received from the commander-in-chief an explicit order early in the day directing him to put his corps in a position to meet a flank attack. Were there any incongruities in his corps which prevented him from obeying that command? On the contrary, his division commanders urged in the strongest terms the changes required; but General Howard refused utterly to be counselled by them. Courier after courier came bringing intelligence that the enemy was massing on his flank, but still he refused to give heed to the portents of an attack. To General Schemmelfinnig, who was eager to find out what was going on on his front, he gave orders to avoid bringing on an engagement, to stop reconnoitring, and take the position assigned him. It was not then the incongruities in his corps, but his own refusal to put his corps in position to meet an attack from the west, when he had received the explicit orders

of his chief to do so, and was constantly receiving intelligence which confirmed the necessity of a prompt and unhesitating compliance therewith, which brought the disaster. It has been argued, in extenuation of the breaking of the corps, that it was attacked by superior numbers. General Howard had some ten thousand men. Is it to be supposed, that with such a force, properly disposed behind breastworks, on the excellent positions which he had at his command, with artillery well posted and protected, that he could not have held the enemy in check until supports could be brought up? Was it not in his power, with such a force, to have made for himself on that line a *point d'appui*, from which he could have held back the whole rebel army? Could the position at Dowdall's tavern have been held, and the commanding ground at Hazel grove been firmly occupied, there can be no doubt what would have been the result of the battle. What then must we conclude was the cause of the rapid giving way of the Eleventh corps, and thus endangering the integrity of the whole army? Can it be put in any milder form than that it was due to the criminal negligence of General Howard in not carrying out the orders of the general-in-chief?

When the position at Dowdall's tavern was lost, it necessitated the abandonment of the open, commanding eminence at Hazel grove, and General Hooker found himself with no ground to stand upon, being hemmed in so closely in front, flank, and rear that missiles from the enemy, aimed at the line in front, could carry to the line facing in the opposite direction; and the Chancellor house, where were the headquarters of the army, was the centre of a concentric fire bearing down upon it from the segment of three-quarters of a circle. At Hazel grove, the enemy's artillery could take in reverse both the fortified line occupied by the infantry of General Geary, and the infantry and artillery at Fairview. With the giving way of the Eleventh corps, and the disasters which it directly entailed, it became imperative to withdraw to other ground, where some reasonable chance could be afforded to manœuvre the army. But, notwithstanding General Hooker was thus cramped and hemmed in by this sudden loss of his position, his army stood at bay, and for five hours made one of the most magnificent fights known in warfare.

Hancock and Geary faced Lee and easily kept him in check. But the corps of Sickles, and the division of Williams, outnumbered by the army of Jackson together with the division of Anderson brought to its support, and vastly overreached in position, only held their ground by the most determined bravery. The rebel leaders had taught their men to believe that one Confederate was as good as three Union men. But they here learned, to their sorrow, that one man in blue was as good as one and a half in gray. It was on this ground that their leader, Jackson, fell, and here a vast number of their bravest and their best went down. It was called by the Confederates a glorious victory. According to the usual estimates of warfare it was. But it would have required only a few more such victories to have ended the rebellion. Chancellorsville was one of those heavy blows, however it may be regarded by the inconsiderate, which finally brought the Confederacy to destruction.

The fall of General Hooker, by a solid shot which struck the pillar of the Chancellor house, near which he was standing, and rendered him senseless, inflicting, what was believed at the time, a fatal injury, robbed the Union army at the supreme moment of the battle of his directing hand. It was at a time when Sickles' corps was inflicting terrible slaughter. The enemy were evidently weakening under his ponderous blows. But his ammunition was fast being consumed, and it was impossible to replenish it in face of this terrific fire. He called for reinforcements. But the tongue, whose utterance would have instantly responded, was paralyzed by the terrible shock. It was some time before General Couch, who was next in rank, could assume command. In the meantime, Sickles again and again called for help, but none came. General Couch, when once in command, determined to act upon the evident intention of General Hooker in the early morning, to put his army upon a new line which his engineers had selected during the night, and, hence, did not respond to the calls of Sickles, at a time when there was a fair prospect of beating the enemy on the contracted line then occupied, and the opportunity passed away. Thus, a second time, was the promise of success clouded by a fatality beyond the commander's control.

When once the Union army was drawn in upon the new position,

where the whole force could be deployed and used, General Hooker earnestly courted battle, and though he remained in this position for three days, and until the eight days rations with which he started were completely exhausted, the enemy could not be induced to attack, except to try the position, and in every case was repulsed with fearful slaughter. The two armies had not been long in the new positions, before they were strongly intrenched, the troops looking forth from their fortifications, and each party awaiting and endeavoring to tempt the other to advance. What was to be done? General Hooker says: "Early in the war I had come to the conclusion that, with the arms now in use, it would be impossible to carry works by an assault in front, provided they were properly constructed and manned. . . . I do not know of an instance in this war where rifle-pits, properly constructed and properly manned, have been taken by front assaults alone, either on our side or that of the enemy." To open a new campaign with entirely new combinations, from his present position, was, under the circumstances in which he found himself, out of the question, and he wisely determined to withdraw.

At a council of officers held before issuing orders to withdraw, General Meade said that he was for remaining, because he did not think that the enemy would allow the army to retire. General Reynolds, who complained of being tired, had thrown himself upon a bed and fallen asleep, but had previously stated that his opinion coincided with General Meade's. Generals Couch and Sickles were for retiring. General Slocum was not present. General Howard was for advancing, because the army had been driven from its original position by the conduct of his corps.

The matter has been much discussed whether General Sedgwick faithfully obeyed the order of his chief to move to the assistance of the hard-pressed troops at Chancellorsville. The order reached him at 11 o'clock on the evening of the 2d, and was absolute and imperative. It required him to form junction with the main body by daylight on the morning of the 3d. From a fragment of the testimony of General Howe, it would be inferred that General Sedgwick determined at the outset not to make a forced march, as would have been necessary in yielding a prompt compliance with the order.

General Howe says, "Not long after the order was received, General Sedgwick said to General Newton, 'Newton, you move on; Howe will follow, and Brooks and I will take a little nap.' " There is one consideration not usually taken into the account in judging his conduct. General Hooker had informed General Sedgwick what force was in his front, and that correctly. Numerous dispatches had been sent confirmatory of this estimate. But General Sedgwick, who was across the river when the order reached him, had been skirmishing with the enemy opposite Franklin's bridge, and had found them very strong. It is now well known that General Early had the greater part of his force concentrated about Hamilton's crossing, in the immediate front of Sedgwick, and the latter may have, consequently, inferred that the rest of the Fredericksburg line was equally strong, and that General Hooker was mistaken in his information, or that Early had been reinforced subsequent to Hooker's receipt of intelligence. Such, however, was not the fact: the rest of the rebel line, above Hamilton's crossing, and opposite Fredericksburg, was feebly defended; and had he resolutely put his command in motion, and moved rapidly forward, there would have been scarcely any resistance offered. It was a bright star-light night, according to the testimony of General Howe, and if he had broken through the rebel line without much hindrance, he could in six hours have easily reached General Hooker's front, which would have been a full compliance with the orders he had received. The officers under General Sedgwick, who have given their testimony upon this point, very generally agree that this forced march might have been successfully made, and with the probability of only trifling loss. If 22,000 fresh troops could have been in readiness to have precipitated themselves upon General Lee's flank at sunrise on the morning of the 3d, there can be little question but that the rebel army would have been driven in utter rout. Thus again were General Hooker's plans balked by an utter failure of his lieutenant to comply with his orders. In a superstitious age such a succession of miscarriages of plans would have been attributed to the cross purposes of the unseen powers; and is it possible that in the counsels of Divine Providence the time had not yet fully come for the triumph of the national arms?—that Inscrutable Wisdom required still

greater trials and patient endurance for the purging away of national transgressions?

By waiting until eleven o'clock on the morning of the 3d before attempting to break through the enemy's lines, Sedgwick gave them time to take every precaution, point every gun, and get every man into position, and when he did make his advance a thousand of his best troops were sacrificed in carrying that feeble line—a needless sacrifice. By three o'clock in the afternoon he was ready to commence his advance, thus giving the enemy ample time to prepare a skilfully planned ambushade at Salem church, into which he ran without suitable precautions, suffered a bloody repulse, and soon found himself surrounded by a largely outnumbering force, out of which he was obliged to fight his way, sustaining again grievous losses, making the aggregate of his casualties greater than in any other corps in the army, and all this without inflicting any serious damage upon the enemy, or gaining any tactical advantage whatever. This failure was no fault of the men: for a braver body never carried muskets than the men of this corps, nor were there to be found more resolute officers in the army than Sedgwick had for his lieutenants. Had he moved promptly, he would have everywhere taken the enemy by surprise. But moving thus deliberately, he allowed the enemy everywhere to take him by surprise. His final withdrawal was fortunately conducted, his troops acting with great firmness and skill, especially the wing under the command of General Howe.

It was the desire of General Hooker, when he found that the enemy was not likely to attack him in his final position at Chancellorsville, that General Sedgwick should hold and fortify the heights on the south side of the river, covering Bank's ford, while he, leaving a sufficient force in the fortifications to engage the attention of the enemy, should withdraw and join the corps of Sedgwick, thus again completely turning the enemy's position. This was feasible, as the ground in that vicinity is open, and very bold, where a small force could have easily held the whole rebel army at bay, had it been well intrenched. But Sedgwick had become very nervous, and in the multiplicity of cross telegrams, and unaccountable delays in the delivery of messages, the corps had recrossed before



the orders of General Hooker were received, and thus was the final purpose in the plan of the campaign brought to naught.

The criticism has been made that the battle was lost to the Union commander for lack of cavalry present with the army upon the Chancellorsville field. Indeed it was the opinion of the writer upon a partial consideration of the case, and before going upon the field, that the vital defect in the plan of campaign was a deficiency in that arm of the service. But after spending sufficient time upon the ground to thoroughly inspect every part, that view was modified.

As a general rule in warfare there is a well-established law regulating the proportion as to numbers and equipment which the three arms of the service—infantry, cavalry and artillery—should bear to each other, which a commander cannot disregard in entering upon a campaign without thereby imperilling his chances of success. Least of all can a leader dispense with his proper complement of cavalry when making a campaign in an enemy's country, and upon ground with which he is unfamiliar. Cavalry is indispensable to the security of an army. Cavalry ascertains the whereabouts, and dispositions, and purposes of the enemy, and screens from view what is being done in its own ranks.

But while these truths are of general application they admit of some modification in particular instances. On a field like Gettysburg, or Antietam, where, with the exception of thin curtains of woods, all is cleared ground, giving ample opportunity for manœuvring, fighting dismounted, and using light artillery, the quota of cavalry laid down by military writers as proportioned to the other arms of the service cannot be safely curtailed or dispensed with. But here, where there was scarcely one acre of cleared ground to one hundred of wood, which General Warren accurately characterized as "very dense woods, not very large trees, but very difficult to get through, mainly of scrubby oak, what they call black jack there, so that a man could hardly ride through it, and a man could not march through it very well with a musket in his hand, unless he trailed it," and where General Hooker aptly compares the roads to "causeways," what could be done with horses? The narrow ways through the impenetrable thickets could be swept

by artillery. Open fields did not exist for deploying, and where could the horses be sent in fighting dismounted? The only use that could possibly have been made of cavalry in such a country was to find and report the whereabouts of the enemy. But was it not better to send out light columns of infantry and artillery at once, than to be hampered with the care of horses? There were only two stages of the battle when cavalry could have been of great advantage for this purpose—on the morning of the 1st, to have ascertained whether the enemy was in force in advance of Bank's ford, and on the evening of the 2d, to have found what was in Howard's front and flank. In the first case the enemy commanded all the narrow roads with artillery and a heavy skirmish line close up to Chancellorsville, and would not allow the Union cavalry to advance upon them, and there was no other way of forcing the rebel line except by long detour. In the second case Howard knew by the middle of the afternoon, as did his officers, that the enemy were concentrating on his flank, and had he been solicitous to know more, a few regiments of infantry and some flying artillery could have developed the position and strength of the enemy at any point in a half hour's time; whereas it would have been impossible for cavalry to have coped at all in the midst of this dense undergrowth with the enemy's skirmishers covering all the roads.

It may be asserted that the enemy used cavalry to screen the flank movement of Jackson, and to develop the position of the Union right, and the question may arise could not Union cavalry have gone where the rebel horse successfully made their way, and accomplished their purpose? It is true that Fitz-Hugh Lee's cavalry did move across the whole front of Howard, at intervals, charging upon his lines, until Howard's exact position had been clearly ascertained. But why allow this to go on? Why not have stopped it in its incipency? And would not a light line of infantry with howitzers have been much more effectual in preventing its progress than cavalry would have been? Nothing more strongly marks the inefficiency, to use a mild term, of the Eleventh corps commander than his failure to stop this reconnoitring column, and his fear of bringing on a battle.

It will also be averred that a single regiment of cavalry, at the

most critical moment in the fight, so checked the onset of the foe, as to enable the artillery to get their position and pour a terrible weight of metal full in the faces of the oncoming masses. This is true. But it went to its destruction, and the sacrifice could only be justified on the ground of dire necessity.

The question has been gravely considered whether the cavalry, sent out under General Stoneman, accomplished anything helpful to the rest of the army; or anything at all proportionate to the preparations made, or execution required by the orders of the commander-in-chief. It must be confessed that he marched far enough to have reached the ground on which he was sent to operate, and the time he was required to stay he stayed, and when that had expired that he successfully made his way back to rejoin the army. At the outset, that he might purchase immunity from peril from the rebel cavalry, which he feared would be disposed to follow him, he left a full third of his command for the purpose of amusing and detaining the rebel horse on the upper Rapidan, whereas his instructions required him to move with his entire force. When arrived at his destination, which was miles away from the destination fixed by his orders, where the principal destruction was to be effected, the fragment of his command which he had with him was broken into six parts, and sent in different directions, neither of which was strong enough, single-handed, to contend with the enemy successfully, and when arrived at their destinations, one of them, at least, found that the means for effecting the destruction of the work ordered had been forgotten. Some bridges were partially destroyed, and flouring mills and water-tanks; and some track was torn from the road on which were brought General Lee's supplies; but the whole damage done was repaired in less than twenty-four hours. No such destruction was effected as was done to the Cumberland Valley road, when occupied by the rebel forces, where for miles the rails were heated and twisted, and the ties burned, or to the Weldon road, when occupied by the Union forces. It was consequently of little, if any, advantage to General Hooker, in conducting his campaign on the Rappahannock, and when, day after day, he looked anxiously for some intelligence of decided success, which should encourage him to prosecute the campaign, there was no sign, and he

was left to infer that little decisive had been done. Consequently, should he advance from his Chancellorsville position, the enemy, with unbroken communications, would be left free to retire behind the next river or ridge, and again be ready to fight, as he did in the subsequent campaign of the Wilderness. General Hooker had sent word to Sedgwick that he was purposing on the 5th to make a general offensive movement, which would have the effect to leave Sedgwick free to act. This purpose was founded upon the confident expectation of hearing, in the meantime, that his cavalry had completely severed the rebel communications, and was holding a strong position on the enemy's rear. He could not be brought to believe that his cavalry would so completely disobey his instructions, and so successfully shun every hostile encounter, and fail to go near the railroad which he had particularly and repeatedly pointed out as the one it was to advance upon and break up, and that it would neglect to take and hold strong positions on that line. But when no word was brought that any of these things had been done, when Richmond papers of Sunday morning made no mention of disturbance, and when, finally, by the long silence, he came to suspect that nothing effectual had been accomplished, then it was that he saw clearly that should he assume the offensive and succeed in driving the enemy back, if that enemy's communications were intact, it would prove of little practical advantage, and he would be assuming a risk without any adequate motive.

Of the generalship on the rebel side little need be said. There is nothing so much praised as success, and over this, from one end of the Confederacy to the other, were sounded pæans.

The dispositions made upon the upper Rappahannock, and the Rapidan, either for checking an advance, or for penetrating the intentions of the advancing Union troops, were neither carefully made, nor did the force operating in that direction make so much opposition at the passage of the rivers as they were easily capable of doing. The consequence was that the Union column crossed both streams and moved on and occupied Chancellorsville without hindrance. But by remaining in his intrenchments behind Fredericksburg until his antagonist's plans were fully developed, Lee still held the heavy body in his front at bay, and was in readiness

to turn at a moment's notice in the direction where needed. The conduct of General Anderson was eminently judicious. The withdrawing from United States' ford and falling back from Chancellorsville to a position completely covering Bank's ford was an excellent stroke of policy, for it secured the possession of commanding ground, effectually guarding the ford, and was at the same time so near to the main column that it could with scarcely any delay be strengthened, and amply manned. The position thus assumed effectually kept the two wings of the Union army asunder. The fearless attitude assumed by General Jackson on arriving with the main body of the army, at Anderson's intrenchments, ordering as he did the cessation of fortifying and an immediate advance, gave a decided advantage, as it enabled him to check the heads of the Union columns before issuing from the dense forests where, had they been allowed to come, they could have deployed on advantageous ground.

After arriving in presence of General Hooker at Chancellorsville, the plan of battle adopted of dividing the army and moving by a wide detour with the larger part to attack the Union right flank, was a hazardous one, and had it not been for the dense forests by which the movement was successfully screened from the observation of the opposing force, might have proved very disastrous. Had the Union commander got his troops into position at the Welford furnace but a single hour earlier, the attack which he was on the point of delivering would have been made. The chief objection to the manœuvre lay in the length of the circuit to be traversed, which required its separation for so long a time from the body left with General Lee in reaching the point of attack. "It may be laid down," says Jomini, that prince of tacticians, "as a principle, that any movement is dangerous which is so extended as to give the enemy an opportunity, while it is taking place, of beating the remainder of the army in position." In this regard this movement of Jackson was particularly faulty.

The massed attack made by Jackson when once in position, and the provision made for reinforcement of one column by the line next behind it, without waiting to refer the application to the commander of the corps, was admirable, and while it exposed his force to terri-

ble destruction, if skilfully opposed, was almost certain of success. No man knew so well how to make such an attack as did Jackson. The same thing was attempted by Hood before Atlanta, and at Franklin, but in both cases with the most disastrous results. General Pleasanton, when asked by the committee on the conduct of the war, what produced the panic in the Eleventh corps, replied, "The combined effect upon their imaginations of the sound of the musketry and increasing yells of the rebels, and their increasing artillery fire. It was a theatrical effect that Stonewall Jackson could produce better than any other man I have ever seen on the field of battle. You could tell one of his attacks anywhere." The yells here referred to were *sui generis*. The Union cheer was a deep sonorous hurrah, but the rebel note was pitched on the highest key that the voice is capable of reaching, and in its united sound resembled more the continuous screech of a power buzz saw heard at night from the stillness of the forest, than a human cry.

General Hooker made the declaration to the same committee: "Our artillery had always been superior to that of the rebels, as was also our infantry, except in discipline, and that, for reasons not necessary to mention, never did equal Lee's army." On being subsequently asked to explain more particularly what element of superiority he here referred to, he said: "I can only say in speaking of them (rebel infantry) that I attached a technical meaning only to the word discipline. In my own mind I only referred to their vigorous and vehement mode of making their attacks. This may be said to be their characteristic mode of assaulting all through my experience in the war in the army of the east. I never felt it in the west except at Peach Tree creek. Their attacks in the east were *blows*. I felt them particularly at Williamsburg, and Frazier's farm, and the shock seemed to make the earth tremble on which we stood. With whom this mode of attacking originated I have never been informed, and but from being confined generally to the armies in the east, I should think it was a concentrated expression of their unity, their bitterness of feeling towards their adversaries. In no other respects that I know of did they show any superiority over our own troops. They were all, however, whether from the east or the west, hard customers for an enemy to wrestle with."

The temerity of General Jackson in pushing his advantage after making his charge upon the Eleventh corps, was unexampled and cost him his life. It was of a piece with most of his military exploits, which were characterized by rashness which would utterly fail of justification upon the ordinary principles of military science. His turning of the right of Pope in the Second Bull Run campaign, should have cost him the destruction of his corps, had he been matched against a skilful commander with an army well in hand, and his raid in the valley, just previous to the Peninsula campaign, upon all human probabilities, should have ended alike disastrously. His estimate of the temper of the men who were facing him on that final night at Chancellorsville was totally at fault. To his companions who cautioned him not to expose himself so needlessly he replied, "There is no danger: the enemy is routed. Go back and tell General Hill to press on." Could he have been on that field during the remainder of the night and the morning hours of the next day and witnessed the terrible slaughter of his corps, he would not have so judged.

The result of the Chancellorsville campaign upon the final issue of the war is a consideration with which this chapter may fittingly close. The spirit of the troops was not broken by the encounter. They returned to their camps without having accomplished all that had been hoped of them, for reasons which have been set forth; but they inflicted a terrible wound upon the Confederate cause. They lost no honor, they received a great lesson in the costly school of experience, and it should be remembered that these same men two months later, under the same commander, to within two days of the battle, upon the field of Gettysburg, gained the great turning victory of the war. In his congratulatory order to the army General Hooker said: "In withdrawing from the south bank of the Rappahannock before delivering a general battle to our adversaries, the army has given renewed evidence of its confidence in itself and its fidelity to the principles it represents. By fighting at a disadvantage we would have been recreant to our trust, to ourselves, to our cause, and to our country. Profoundly loyal, and conscious of its strength, the army of the Potomac will give or decline battle whenever its interests or honor may command it." The gold market, which was the

most sensitive test, at this time, of disaster, was scarcely disturbed. Secretary Stanton telegraphed on the 7th of May, the day after the recrossing of the army: "The result at Chancellorsville does not seem to have produced any panic. Gold has only risen six *per cent.* in New York, and at the close of the day had gone down four. The public confidence seems to remain unshaken in the belief of your ultimate success."



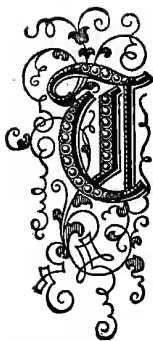






## CHAPTER XII.

### NUMBERS ENGAGED, LOSSES, THE WOUNDED, THE DEAD.



O be told in round numbers the enumeration of each of the contending armies in a battle, gives but an imperfect knowledge of the strengths actually brought to bear against each other in the progress of the struggle. To fully appreciate the real value and potential force of troops, it is necessary to know the numbers of the organizations actually pitted against each other, and the position of all the parts of the armies at the time of impact. A nice discrimination would require a knowledge of the location of the field in its relations to home or country, and the temper of an army towards the cause for which it fights.

The last monthly return made of the Army of Northern Virginia, commanded by General Lee, before the opening of the Chancellorsville campaign, gives the aggregate of the army present and detached at 109,859, exclusive of the artillery of the Second army corps, which would increase the number to at least 112,000, distributed as follows: Anderson's division 14,419, McLaw's division 13,741—an aggregate of Longstreet's corps present of 28,160; A. P. Hill's division 19,411, D. H. Hill's division 15,703, Early's division 14,470, Trimble's division 12,478—an aggregate of Jackson's corps of 62,159; Stuart's cavalry division 12,275; valley District 4,863, artillery 2,384; artillery of Second corps (estimated) 2,259. These figures do not include the three divisions of Pickett, Hood, and Ransom, which were absent with Longstreet, and D. H. Hill, south of the James, and before Little Washington. This ag-

gregate is the number with which General Lee stands charged as under his immediate command, on the monthly return of the army now on file among the rebel archives held in the War Department. The aggregate strength present by the above returns is 73,583, distributed as follows: Anderson's division 9,960, McLaw's division 10,095, A. P. Hill's division 13,614, D. H. Hill's division 11,418, Early's division 9,936, Trimble's division 8,095, Stuart's cavalry, 8,453,\* artillery 1,929. But this record was made twenty-seven days before the campaign opened, and this was at a time when the army was rapidly filling up. Messrs. Hotchkiss and Allen† say: "Prompt measures were taken to prevent desertion, and those who had deserted were brought back in large numbers. The number of absentees from various causes was very great in the beginning of the year. By the spring it was reduced more than half. The conscription act, now fairly put into operation, increased the strength of the army daily. Jackson's corps grew in three months from twenty-five to thirty-three thousand *muskets*."

By a field return of General Lee's army, made on the 20th of May, scarcely two weeks after the battle, the aggregate strength present was 65,250, distributed as follows: Anderson's division 8,890, McLaw's division 8,416, A. P. Hill's division 11,035, Rodes' (D. H. Hill's) division 8,910, Early's division 7,951, Johnson's (Trimble's) division 6,356, Stuart's cavalry division 8,193, artillery 5,503. But these figures do not represent the losses that were sustained in the campaign. By adjusting these losses, and making due allowances for the sick and those in arrest, we have what may be accepted as a fair estimate of Lee's available force on entering the campaign, viz.: 71,777, distributed as follows: Anderson's division 9,779, McLaw's division 9,257, A. P. Hill's division 12,138, D. H. Hill's division 9,801, Early's division 8,746, Stuart's division 9,012,‡ and the artillery 6,053. The Confederate authorities, Hotchkiss and Allen, give the aggregate of *muskets* in Lee's army at 58,200; but add in a foot-note: "We have not the exact data on which to give the effective strength, but an addition of 4,000 to the total above would be a liberal estimate," which plainly demon-

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\* Hampton's division absent.

† Hotchkiss and Allen, p. 14.

‡ Deduct Wade Hampton's division.

strates that they can lay no claim to accuracy for these figures. The 4,000 added to the aggregate given above would make Lee's whole force 62,200, which is manifestly considerably below the number of men present for duty, as shown by the returns as above, in the Confederate army at the time Hooker crossed the Rappahannock.

Fortunately we have a consolidated morning report of the Union army, made on the 30th of April, on the very eve of the battle, which furnishes definite information respecting its strength. Exclusive of commissioned officers the whole number was 123,726, but, including officers, 131,519, distributed as follows: First corps 15,782, Second corps 15,907, Third corps 17,568, Fifth corps 14,867, Sixth corps 22,427, Eleventh corps 12,169, Twelfth corps 12,929, cavalry 11,402, and artillery 8,468.

At the various stages of the battle, when the issues were being tried most severely, the numbers pitted against each other were as varying as the fortunes of the day, and it is curious, as well as instructive, to note them. In the first encounter of the two armies at a little past noon of the 1st of May, there were less than 27,000 Union troops in hand, and in position to be used, whereas they were confronted by upwards of 47,000, exclusive of the cavalry, in perfect readiness for action, with good ground on which to manœuvre, and heavy breastworks prepared in which to retire if hard pressed.

The three divisions of Jackson's corps, which he had with him in his flank movement on the 2d, numbered 28,930, exclusive of cavalry and artillery. With the exception of the two brigades of Archer and Thomas, of Hill's division, which had turned aside from the line of march at the Welford furnace, that numbered between three and four thousand men, Jackson had this entire body in hand and in position for attack, when he made his grand onslaught upon the Eleventh corps, while Howard had but 12,929, and of this number Barlow's brigade, numbering between one and two thousand men, had been detached and was miles away when the attack was made.

When Sedgwick made his advance at Fredericksburg he had his entire corps, numbering 22,427, whereas Barksdale and Early had less than 11,000 men to oppose him.

At Chancellorsville, on the morning of the 3d, Jackson's entire

corps was up and in hand, 28,930, exclusive of cavalry and artillery, bating the losses of the previous evening in the encounter with Howard; and to this force there stood opposed the corps of Sickles, Williams' division of the Twelfth corps, and William Hays' brigade of the Second corps, between twenty-one and twenty-two thousand men.

There are some considerations respecting the real strength of Hooker's army which should be taken into the account in contrasting it with the strength of Lee's. There were some forty regiments of nine months and two years men, whose time had either fully expired, or was so near expiring, that they could not be counted in the effective strength, and it will be seen by reference to General Hooker's orders, that corps commanders were directed to leave such regiments in camp or on detached duty. Then, four thousand of the number embraced in the above estimates acted as pioneers. Again, with the exception of three small regiments, the entire cavalry corps was on detached service, miles away from the field, where it was of no earthly use to the general, and accomplished scarcely anything it was set to do. On the contrary Lee had a homogeneous army, standing on its own soil, composed of men who were impelled by one idea. If all these conditions be taken into consideration it will be seen that the numbers actually in hand for service were much nearer an equality than has been generally supposed.

The losses sustained in the several encounters, extending through nearly eight days, are quite accurately ascertained from official sources, though in the rebel account there are some discrepancies between the tabulated record made by the medical director, and the numbers given in the official report of officers. From a remark which occurs in General Colston's report, after giving the losses in the division that he commanded, viz.: "Two hundred and sixty-seven killed, fifteen hundred and ninety-two wounded, making eighteen hundred and forty-nine casualties, not counting the very slightly wounded," it may be inferred that the discrepancies can be accounted for by supposing that the very slightly wounded are not counted in the lesser enumerations. Following will be found in tabulated forms the losses by killed and wounded in the two armies.

## UNION ARMY LOSSES, OFFICIAL.

	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.
First corps .....	34	104	138
Second corps .....	145	1,045	1,190
Third corps .....	361	2,559	2,920
Fifth corps .....	70	470	540
Sixth corps .....	473	2,536	3,009
Eleventh corps .....	218	1,163	1,381
Twelfth corps .....	248	1,427	1,675
Artillery corps .....	55	281	336
Cavalry corps .....	8	6	14
Total .....	1,612	9,591	11,203

## CONFEDERATE ARMY LOSSES, OFFICIAL.

	Killed.	Wounded.	Total.
Early's division .....	136	838	974
A. P. Hill's division .....	418	2,260	2,678
Trimble's division .....	298	1,720	2,018
D. H. Hill's division .....	397	1,856	2,253
Anderson's division .....	186	1,049	1,235
McLaws' division .....	213	1,296	1,509
Artillery division .....	13	55	68
Cavalry division .....	4	7	11
Total .....	1,665	9,081	10,746

These figures have been carefully collated from the official reports of the division and brigade commanders, and may be regarded as representing as nearly absolute accuracy as data can be made.

The number of "missing in action" is not set forth in all the reports of the commanding generals in the Confederate army, though they are given by a part of them. General Early reports 500 missing from his division, General Rodes, from D. H. Hill's division, 713, General McLaws, from his division, 380. If a proportionate number was missing from the other four divisions, it would give a total of missing in action or taken prisoners of 3,626. The missing from the Union army is reported at 6,232, a somewhat larger number than that reported for the opposing army, but doubtless represents the full loss sustained in the campaign.

During the progress of a great battle, no duty is more imperative,

both for preserving the integrity of an army, and for humanity's sake, than the care for the wounded. Indeed, on the medical direction of an army largely depends its efficiency. The power of endurance, the vigor requisite to ward off disease, and the temper of mind and body favorable to rallying from the effect of wounds, is largely in the keeping of the medical staff. Fortunately for the Army of the Potomac, its medical director, Surgeon Jonathan Letterman, was a man of eminent ability, of enlarged and enlightened views, and was intensely devoted to the discharge of his great duties. It was a fact, notorious in army life, that after the three fruitless campaigns undertaken by Burnside, there was a feeling in the army of utter despondency, and that it required the utmost exertions of General Hooker to bring it up to a state of efficiency and reliability. Indeed, if there is any one thing for which General Hooker has won the gratitude of his country, it is for having disciplined and made that army self-reliant, a power, real, and commensurate with its numbers and resources, and which carried it successfully through the great campaign of Gettysburg. As we have already seen, Colonel MacDougall has ranked the passage of the Rappahannock as one of the great military feats in all countries and of all ages. But the passage, unopposed, of the Rappahannock, was but the game of a child compared with the feat accomplished in inspiring the hundred thousand men who followed him with the spirit of soldiership. In this herculean labor, General Hooker was greatly aided by his faithful lieutenant, Surgeon Letterman. In his general report, published after the close of the war, he justly remarks upon the measures inaugurated at this period: \* "A corps of medical officers was not established solely for the purpose of attending the wounded and sick; the proper treatment of these sufferers is certainly a matter of very great importance, and is an imperative duty; but the labors of medical officers cover a more extended field. The leading idea, which should be constantly kept in view, is to strengthen the hands of the commanding general by keeping his army in the most vigorous health, thus rendering it in the highest degree efficient for enduring fatigue and privation, and for fighting. In this view, the duties of such a corps are of vital

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\* "Medical Recollections of the Army of the Potomac," Letterman, p. 100.



importance to the success of an army, and commanders seldom appreciate the full effect of their proper fulfilment. Medical officers should possess a thorough knowledge of the powers, wants, and capabilities of the human system, the effect of food, raiment, and climate, with all its multiplied vicissitudes, the influences for evil which surround the health of an army, and the means necessary to combat them successfully. They should also possess quickness of perception, a sound judgment, promptness in action, and skill in the treatment of medical and surgical diseases. It is the interest of the government, aside from all motives of humanity, to bestow the greatest possible care upon its wounded and sick, and to use every means to preserve the health of those who are well, since the greater the labor given to the preservation of health, the greater will be the number for duty, and the more attention bestowed upon the sick and wounded, the more speedily will they perform the duties for which they are employed, or be discharged from a service which they can no longer benefit. When medical officers consider this subject attentively, all their high and important duties will naturally occur to them. The measures resulting from my views of the duty of a medical staff exerted a beneficial influence upon the troops, whose dispirited condition was so perceptible after the battle of Fredericksburg. Whatever may have been the cause of this depressed feeling, there was no doubt of its existence; and constant watchfulness and determination were required of the medical officers to detect the numerous instances of feigned sickness, to prevent the lists of sick being swelled by men who magnified trifling ailments to avoid duty, and to break up the existing mania for being sent to general hospitals, from which they too seldom returned to their commands."

The results of the intelligent and persistent labors of Director Letterman were abundantly successful. "My anticipations," he says, "were realized, as will be perceived from the fact that this army, which numbered over one hundred and forty thousand, infantry and artillery, had, in defiance of the numerous and powerful influences for evil acting upon the health of the men, a sick report under four and a half per cent. Not only was the percentage small, but those not on the lists of sick were in vigorous health,

and in buoyant spirits arising therefrom. More soldiers die by disease than by violence, and if a medical staff can secure their health, its officers contribute largely to the success of a campaign. I had a two-fold object in perfecting the physical condition of the troops. First, that the commanding general should have an army upon whose health he could rely. Second, that those who might be wounded should be in a condition to bear the shock, and the operation, the suppuration, and confinement, with every prospect of recovery. No commander ever had an army in better health or in higher spirits, no wounded ever progressed more favorably than those from the field of Chancellorsville."

It was the intention of Surgeon Letterman, had the way been opened, as had been hoped it might, to remove the Union wounded directly to Fredericksburg, where smooth roads would have been available, and the distance but some ten miles, instead of that by United States ford, which was twenty-five miles, and the ways very rough. The wounded of the First and Fifth corps, on the 1st of May, were taken first to the Chancellor house, and subsequently, as it became evident that this edifice would come under the enemy's artillery fire, were removed to hospitals established to right and left of the United States ford road, a mile or two in rear. The wounded of the Eleventh corps, in the encounter with Jackson on the evening of the 2d, were also removed farther to the rear in the same direction. With the opening of the battle on the morning of the 3d, the number of the wounded was vastly multiplied. But the arrangements for removing them to the hospitals, and attending to their hurts, were admirably planned and most efficiently executed. The necessities of the service induced the commanding general to forbid any wagons following the troops across the river, and but two ambulances to each division. The medical supply, and ambulance train in excess of this number, was parked on the north bank of the river in close proximity to the ford. The lack of these facilities on the field were felt, when, on the morning of the 3d, the wounded rapidly accumulated. But the efficiency and energy displayed by the medical and hospital corps caused the work of removal to be rapidly done. As fast as the wounded were cared for and could be got ready, they were sent to the permanent corps hospitals at Potomac

creek and Brook's station. When, on the morning of the 3d, the army abandoned its first position about Chancellorsville, and took up the more contracted line covering United States ford, it was impossible to carry all the wounded back, and a considerable number was left upon the abandoned portion of the field, who fell into the enemy's hands. In each of the field hospitals a Union surgeon remained in charge on the final withdrawal across the river. Surgeon George Suckley, medical director of the Fifth corps, and a number of other surgeons stayed by the wounded, rendering efficient aid. The entire number of Union wounded who thus fell into the enemy's hands, on the Chancellorsville field proper, was some twelve hundred.

When the Sixth corps, under Sedgwick, made its advance upon the works at Fredericksburg, at noon on the 3d of May, the loss in killed and wounded, in about twenty minutes time, was nearly a thousand. The latter were immediately removed to hospitals established in the town, and were eventually, with the exception of the desperately wounded, sent across the river. In the terrible fighting on the evening of the 3d, at Salem church, midway between Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the wounded were taken back to Fredericksburg, where the hospitals were in charge of Gibbons' division of the Second corps. During the night of the 3d, the heights above Fredericksburg were reoccupied by the enemy, and the way to the town was cut off. But the bridges at Bank's ford had now been laid, and the wounded of the 4th were retired by that avenue, though some difficulty was experienced, as the enemy held the heights above Colin run, and could drop his shells in uncomfortable proximity to the crossings. Nevertheless, the work was so studiously prosecuted that only about seventy-five fell into the enemy's hands upon the final retirement of the corps.

The utmost solicitude was manifested by General Hooker for the care of, and speedy recovery of those unfortunate men, who, by the chances of war, had to be left upon the field, and negotiations were opened with General Lee for their relief, when the smoke of the battle had scarcely cleared from the field. On the evening of the 7th of May, General Hooker addressed the following communication to General Lee: "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your two communications of May 6th and 7th, this moment. If

agreeable to you, I would like to send medical supplies and attendance to my wounded, and at such time as the state of the stream will permit, send ambulances for them *via* the fords designated in your communications, viz., United States ford and Bank's ford. I will, with your consent, send parties to those fords with supplies at an early hour to-morrow. The swollen state of the Rappahannock probably preventing the crossing of any vehicles with supplies, I shall have to depend upon you for transportation for them. I will receive the wounded at the points named as soon as it can be done. I will send an officer to Chancellorsville, with your consent, to arrange the details, which, judging from your letter, with the state of the river, cannot now be determined by correspondence. Upon an intimation from you as to any deficiency in your immediate necessities of medical supplies of your own, by reason of their use for my wounded, or other causes, I shall with pleasure replace them. I would be obliged for approximate information concerning the number of wounded, that sufficient amount of supplies may be forwarded. I would be under obligations for an early reply."

It was not in the heart of General Hooker to regard suffering with indifference even in a foeman, and while he struck with relentless hand while in battle array, and smote with terrible earnestness his enemies in the hour of conflict, yet when the noise of the encounter was hushed, and the moans of the gashed and famishing were heard, he was touched with compassion, and whether friend or foe they shared equally while he had the means of relief. In compliance with the suggestions of this communication, and in accordance with arrangements entered into between surgeons Letterman and Guild, medical directors of the two armies, to whom were referred the details of caring for and removing the Union wounded, on the 8th of May, Dr. Asch, with twenty-six Union surgeons, and five army wagons laden with blankets, stimulants, lint, bandages, chloroform, and beef stock was sent to their relief. On the same day six hundred rations of fresh bread, beef, coffee, sugar, salt and candles were sent to Bank's ford for the use of the wounded left in that vicinity, and on the following day two thousand rations of the same articles were despatched to Chancellorsville. These twenty-six surgeons, together with the nineteen who were taken prisoners, or voluntarily remained,

formed a force ample for the care of all the wounded left upon the field. The presence of these officers, with the nourishing food and stimulants, revived and encouraged the suffering heroes. These supplies reached the wounded, says Surgeon Asch in his report, "very opportunely; the wounded were cheered by the knowledge that some provision was being made for them, and many lives were saved by the free use of stimulants, and the nourishing food distributed."

General Lee promptly offered free passage to the camps of the wounded, and, doubtless, touched by the humane sentiments of the Union commander-in-chief in tendering medical relief to the suffering men of both armies, considerately sent a message offering free entry by the Union ambulance corps to the battle-ground, thus relieving these unfortunate soldiers from the suffering which they would have been compelled to endure had there been a necessity for transfer at the river. Thus the amenities, even of war, were not without their compensations upon that very battle-field, and of their influence in conducting other and remote campaigns none can make computation.

As soon as it was announced that the Union ambulances could freely cross the river, four hundred and fifty of these conveyances, carrying two thousand seven hundred pounds of beef stock, were despatched to the United States ford, and a requisite number also to Bank's ford and Fredericksburg. Some delay was occasioned in securing the laying of a pontoon bridge, as the waters were still high, the river being entirely too deep for fording; but on the 13th, bridges were completed and the ambulance train, now increased to five hundred and fifty, crossed over, and by nine o'clock of the 15th the sufferers, numbering eleven hundred and sixty, were within the Union lines.

It is a sad commentary on the burial of the dead in this battle that so few were identified, when they came to be removed to the cemetery prepared for their reception by the authority of the general government. Of the 15,257 gathered from the fields of Chancellorsville, Fredericksburg, Wilderness, and Spottsylvania, all but 2,488 are unknown. This burial-place was appropriately chosen, being upon the summit of that noted hill known as Marye's heights,

at the base of which, and in front of the stone walls which encircled it, so many of those, now resting there, braved death, and heroically offered up their lives. It is about a mile west of the city of Fredericksburg, on the southern extremity of the bluff, and contains twelve acres. The ground was selected, and work commenced upon it in the summer of 1866, and the removals were all made, and the improvements completed by the fall of 1869. The surface of the eastern portion is arranged in terraces, nine upon the right and eleven upon the left of the main avenue, each containing one row of graves, and following the slope of the original surface, including about one-fourth of its area. The remaining portion is nearly level, excepting the extreme southern part, which is broken by a ravine. Near the centre of this part is a small circular mound, in which stands a graceful flag-staff, from which the stars and stripes float daily from sunrise to sunset.

Near the flag-staff in the angles of the four sections centering at that point are planted four large cannon, as gun monuments, on one of which is a bronze shield bearing the name of the cemetery, date of its establishment, and number of interments, with the national coat of arms. In 1867-8 several hundred shade-trees and shrubs were planted. The grounds are inclosed by a substantial brick wall. The superintendent's lodge, which stands upon a gentle eminence to the right of the entrance, is a one and a-half story cottage of some architectural pretension, appropriately built of the stones of that frowning wall behind which the enemy was sheltered, and which the Union troops were obliged unprotected to face.

The graves have been well sodded, the roads and walks gravelled, and brick gutters laid along every section and down the margin of every road. The graves are marked by granite tablets, with the proper inscriptions. The officer of highest rank buried here is Colonel James Crowther, of the One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania volunteer infantry. Upon the title-leaf of the roll of honor\* which records their names and various designations are these significant lines:

"Let summer send her golden sunbeams down  
In graceful salutations for the dead,  
And autumn's moving host of leaflets brown  
Break ranks above the fallen soldier's head."

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\* "Roll of Honor," p. 1, Vol. XXV.

The spectre corps! Fifteen thousand strong! And does reveille arouse them at morning light, and the sentinel cease to challenge the approaching footstep? Does the proud bird of the sun lead them to battle, and the star-lit banner float out from the rifted clouds that roll up from the thickening fight? Does the heart of the veteran thrill at the tramp of the legion? Does the cheer of victory carry gladness to the heart, and when the battle is won does he march on to new conquests? Does the mutilated victim groan out his agony upon the night air, and is he left in loneliness while life ebbs away? When the campaign is ended and recruits again fill the ranks, does the legion with quick step and gleaming musket march to the parade, and preserve the glorious circumstance of war? Does the tent shelter the dreamer of home, and loved ones? Is the camp aroused at midnight to march stealthily by the flank, and crossing river or mountain-chain, come in upon the foe from an unguarded side? Does the leader pass sleepless nights in planning the discomfiture, and utter rout of his adversary? Does the scout in his masked garb and with his feigned accent, thread the mazes of the hostile battlements, count the white tents that compass all the plain, or watch on some rugged eminence for a view of the evening camp-fires where repose the unsuspecting foe? Does the steed paw in the valley, and rejoice in his strength, and go on to meet the armed men? Does he mock at fear, and turn not back from the sword? Does the quiver rattle against him, the glittering spear and the shield? Does he swallow the ground with fierceness and rage, nor believe it the sound of the trumpet? Does he say among the trumpets ha! ha! and does he smell the battle from afar, the thunder of the captains and the shoutings?

Nay, nay! This is the camping-ground of the spectre legion! Not the frosts of the mountain nor the wild blasts of the plain can longer touch the reposing squadrons! The burning sun of the summer, and the torrid heats of the desert can overcome them no more! No more will they be called to dare the swollen stream! The plague and the pestilence cannot come near them! The clashing of steel cannot make afraid! The bursting shell can no longer tear limb from limb! The fatal bullet has no power to hurt! Envy and jealousy have had their last spite! Ambition and glory their

last triumph! At length they have rest! On fresh camping-ground, by sweet flowing streams, their silent tents are spread.

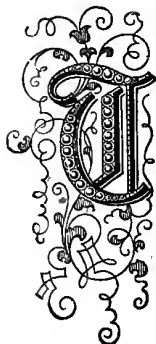
“The neighing troop, the flashing blade,  
The bugle’s stirring blast,  
The charge, the dreadful cannonade,  
The din and shout are past ;  
Nor war’s wild note nor glory’s peal  
Shall thrill with fierce delight,  
Those breasts that never more may feel  
The raptures of the fight.”





## CHAPTER XIII.

THE INJURIES OF HOOKER—THE WOUNDS OF JACKSON—THE  
CHARGE OF KEENAN.



THE INJURIES OF HOOKER.—In its order in the narrative, the particulars respecting the manner of General Hooker's injury, on the morning of the 3d of May, are given as he himself has described them in his testimony before the Committee of Congress. Dr. Letterman, in his "Recollections,"\* says: "The headquarters of General Hooker were much exposed to the fire of the enemy. On the 3d of May, a round shot struck the stone steps of the portico, upon which the commanding general stood, watching the progress of the battle, knocked down a solid wooden pillar, which struck him and felled him to the floor. Being within a few feet of him at the time of the accident, I saw him fall, and was instantly with him, and had him taken to his room; he was very much stunned by the blow, although no bones were broken. The rumor spread rapidly that General Hooker was killed, and to dispel that idea he appeared to the troops, though scarcely able to sit upon his horse. The effect of this blow and fall lasted for some hours."

There can be no doubt that the injury General Hooker received at this time was of a most serious character, and it was only by the exercise of his indomitable will, under a sense of his great responsibilities, that he was enabled to keep the field and show to the army that he was still at its head. The injury was received, too, just at that time in the battle when the pinch had come, and when rein-

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\* "Medical Recollections of the Army of the Potomac," Letterman, p. 137.

forcements needed to be sent where called for on the instant, and the gravest decisions promptly made. It was at a time, of all others in the progress of the campaign, when the army could least afford to spare its directing power. General Sickles, in his testimony, says: \* "The attack of the enemy on Sunday was made on my front in great force. They attacked as they generally do—the favorite field tactics of Jackson—in heavy columns. General Hooker, of course, not knowing precisely where the attack would be made, had his forces disposed as usual, in double line of battle, but sufficiently extended to cover all the points of attack available to the enemy. I reported to him the great force of the enemy in my front, and my ability, in my judgment, to hold my position as long as my ammunition would last; but that the force of the enemy enabled him constantly to bring fresh troops up to the attack—that my last reserves had been put into position, and it was very important, as that seemed to be the point that the enemy were bent upon attacking, that I should be supported. An aide-de-camp, Major Tremaine, took this last and most urgent communication to General Hooker. Of course I had made frequent reports to him of the progress of things in my immediate front. That communication I regarded as of the most important character. It was taken to him at the time when he had been struck down by a piece of the door or pillar of the apartment, which he was occupying at Chancellorsville, being knocked against him. He was knocked senseless, and Major Tremaine was unable to make the communication to him. Some of General Hooker's staff were present; and from his appearance and the character of the blow, they supposed at the time that the injury would result fatally.

"I received a report of this from Major Tremaine, and sent him back again. I think I sent the same officer; at all events I sent a staff officer, for the purpose of making the communication to the next senior officer who would take command. I received no official communication from headquarters, however, and no support came to me. And my artillery ammunition having been exhausted, I withdrew my artillery from the defences thrown up during the night—

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 8.

withdrew it in good order and without loss. I also withdrew my infantry, which had been somewhat in front, to the second line behind the works, expecting to hold them for a time with the bayonet, and looking every moment for support to come up. The enemy seemed to be satisfied with having forced me to withdraw my infantry from their front line to this second position, and the battle paused for a half an hour or more. The loss inflicted upon the enemy, especially by my artillery, was most severe. Their formation for the attack was entirely broken up, and from my headquarters they presented to the eye the appearance of a mass, a crowd, without definite formation; and if another corps had been available at that moment to have relieved me, or even to have supported me, my judgment was that not only would that attack of the enemy have been triumphantly repulsed, but that we could have advanced on them and carried the day. And that undoubtedly would have been done in ample season, and before my ammunition gave out, and compelled me to withdraw, but for the injury that General Hooker received. . . . As near as I can fix the time, I suppose he must have received this injury at quite an early hour in the morning—I should say, perhaps, between eight and nine o'clock—and I had no communication from him indicating him to have been in command until, perhaps, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon. He was then, I should say, in a condition, from his injury, that forbade his resuming command; he was evidently suffering great agony, and I suppose nothing but the highest sense of duty could have prompted him to resume command under such circumstances. He was mounted on his horse, and was perfectly clear in all respects as to orders and everything, but was evidently suffering great bodily pain.”

“*Question.* Were his mental faculties impaired in any way when you saw him?”

“*Answer.* No, sir; except that they might be by bodily suffering.”

“*Question.* Do you suppose, if he had been well enough to have answered your request for reinforcements, it would have turned the whole tide of battle?”

“*Answer.* Yes, sir; I have no doubt the battle would have been

won in thirty minutes; at least, it would have been won in an hour. It would have been won just as soon as you could have got ten thousand men from the right or left to have repulsed that attack."

General Birney, in his testimony\* upon this point, says, "I think that if on Sunday morning we had been properly supported—that is, if the troops that were there had been brought up, the enemy could have been defeated then. I regard not doing this a great mistake."

"*Question.* Why was not that done?"

"*Answer.* I have understood that it was owing to the accident to General Hooker early in the morning."

"*Question.* How long a time, as you understood, was General Hooker really incapable of taking the charge of affairs there?"

"*Answer.* It was some two hours that he was reported to me as being almost insensible."

"*Question.* And that during the most essential and critical time there was?"

"*Answer.* In the height of it. I understood the injury resulted from a round shot striking a pillar of the house against which he was leaning, the severe concussion knocking him insensible. I saw a great deal of him during the afternoon. He remained a part of the afternoon at the position I occupied upon the road."

"*Question.* What was his condition after that accident?"

"*Answer.* He seemed to show its effects a great deal in his manner; that is, he was more quiet than usual with him; it seemed to have the stunning effect that a very severe blow would naturally have upon any one."

"*Question.* And you have reason to suppose that that had a very disastrous effect upon the operations of the army?"

"*Answer.* I think so; that is, the movements early in the morning of Sunday. The statements that I have heard that he was under the influence of liquor, I think, are utterly false."

General Hancock testified as follows in answer to the question if he saw much of General Hooker on the field: "Not on the last day; I only saw him on horseback at a distance. I recollect the

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\* "Conduct of the War," 1865, Vol. I., p. 36.

† Ibid., p. 70.

confusion incident upon the occasion when he was hurt. I saw the colonnade fly when the ball struck it, but I had no conversation with him on that day."

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THE WOUNDS OF JACKSON.—The event of the Chancellorsville conflict which caused intense sorrow to the enemy, and which was regarded as entailing the greatest injury to their cause, was the fatal wounding of General Jackson. In the proper place in the narrative, we have made a somewhat lengthy quotation from the work of Hotchkiss and Allen, that we might give the exact impression which the rebel authorities themselves desire to have pass as a veritable version of this sad theme. But while giving their authors the benefit of their own testimony, it would be unjust to withhold the fact, that it is held by many, that the wounds of which Jackson died were inflicted by the fire of the Union infantry. There have been undoubtedly extravagant pretensions set up for having performed the feat of directing the fatal bullets, as though there were some merit or honor in having been the instrument of his destruction. Perhaps the most absurd of these claims is that set up by General Pleasanton, that Jackson was killed by the fire of his artillery in front of Hazel grove; whereas it is known from the circumstantial account given by the rebel surgeons, that his wounds were produced by bullets such as are used in the Springfield muskets, and from the testimony of his aids and escort, that he was wounded in the vicinity of the Orange plank road; indeed, but a few feet from that road, as pointed out to me by Major George E. Chancellor, the son of Melzi Chancellor, whose home has always been in the neighborhood, who was a member of Stuart's cavalry, and was at the time on the field, and would be likely, at least, to know the beliefs entertained by the enemy themselves. General Pleasanton says in his testimony, "But I think the whole turn of the battle was the death of Stonewall Jackson, or his being mortally wounded. According to the statements of the prisoners taken that night, he was wounded by this very fire [his artillery]."

General De Peyster, who has studied this subject very thoroughly, and has sifted all the evidence with that keenness and care for which he is noted, has given the following results of his investigations in

an article published in the December number, 1869, of the "Onward," a magazine conducted by Captain Mayne Reid: "The moonbeams," he says, "were pouring their silvery radiance through the partially developed foliage, casting long fantastic shadows across the corpse-strewn openings and glades, when, about nine o'clock (according to one account, but most likely at a later hour), Stonewall Jackson rode out to reconnoitre, and by a personal examination prepare himself to deliver another similar shock upon our line on the ensuing morning, 3d of May, as that crowned with such success at the sunset of the 2d. It was the last sunset he was ever destined to behold. In the adjacent works lay the First Massachusetts infantry. They had marked the approach of the strange cavalcade, and with true aim delivered a volley, among many others laying low the greatest soldier, and the most brilliant military genius that gave glory to the Confederate cause, throughout its four years' brave but ill-starred struggle for the subversion of the Republic. The Confederates claim that their own bullets, fired at random, cost them this precious sacrifice. Well may Chaplain Cudworth ask: 'If, as the rebels claim, Jackson had been fired upon by one of his own regiments, why did his staff turn and flee?' . . . Why should any Northern man doubt, deny, or strive to disprove this claim of the staunch, and bold, and true old Bay State? It is easy to understand why the South should do so. If it is any alleviation of their inestimable loss, let them continue in this way of thinking. A New Yorker, however, here feels it a solemn duty to present the claim of Massachusetts; and no Northerner will seek to diminish the magnitude of that sharp volley poured into the moonlit glade, smiting to dust the brain, and eye, and tongue, and victory-bearing arm, with which the arch rebel, Lee, might have been assured success; and without which all his laurels that had been twined by Jackson, withered and crumbled, never to bud again on another battle-field. . . . But, whether he fell by the bullets of his own men or by the balls of the opposing Unionists—as is much more probable—it matters not. The result was of incalculable advantage to the latter. Stonewall Jackson's influence as a power was annihilated. There, in the moonlit glade of that mysterious Wilderness, just bursting into leaf and blossom, the leaves and

flowers of his own great life shrivelled and died, blasted by a shattering volley, as unlooked for as the levin bolt when it falls from a sudden cloud upon some overtowering tree, that has long stood, the admiration and wonder of all who gazed upon its pre-eminent grandeur."

The question arises, "By whom was this report first made that Jackson was killed by his own troops?" The account given by Hotchkiss and Allen of Jackson's fall is very guarded, many of the "cock and bull" parts of the story, as narrated by other writers, being omitted; yet they give no authorities for their statements, and adduce no testimony to substantiate their positions, leaving the reader to take the facts entirely on trust. In a "Life of General Jackson, by an Ex-Cadet" (Richmond, 1864), p. 182, the following account of Jackson's fall is given: "General Jackson ordered General Hill to advance with his division, reserving his fire *unless cavalry approached from the direction of the enemy*; and then, with that burning and intense enthusiasm for conflict which lay under his calm exterior, hastened forward to the line of skirmishers who were hotly engaged in front. Such was his ardor at this critical moment, and his anxiety to penetrate the movements of the enemy, doubly screened as they were by dense forest and gathering darkness, that he rode ahead of his skirmishers, and exposed himself to a close and dangerous fire from the enemy's sharpshooters, posted in the timber. So great was the danger which he thus ran, that one of his staff said, 'General, don't you think this is the wrong place for you?' He replied, quickly: 'The danger is all over, the enemy is routed. Go back and tell A. P. Hill to press right on!' Soon after giving this order General Jackson turned, and, accompanied by his staff and escort, rode back at a trot on his well-known 'Old Sorrel,' toward his own men. Unhappily, in the darkness—it was now nine or ten o'clock at night—the little body of horsemen was mistaken for Federal cavalry charging, and the regiments on the right and left of the road fired a sudden volley into them with the most lamentable results. Captain Boswell, of General Jackson's staff, was killed, and borne into our lines by his horse; Colonel Crutchfield, Chief of Artillery, was wounded, and two couriers were killed. General Jackson received one ball in his left arm,

two inches below the shoulder-joint, shattering the bone and severing the chief artery; a second passed through the same arm, between the elbow and wrist, making its exit through the palm of the hand; a third ball entered the palm of his right hand, about the middle, and passing through broke two of the bones. He fell from his horse, and was caught by Captain Wormly, to whom he said, 'All my wounds are by my own men!' The firing was responded to by the enemy, who made a sudden advance; and the Confederates falling back, their foes actually charged over Jackson's body. He was not discovered, however; and, the Federals being driven back in turn, he was rescued."

The quotation made above opens with the statement that "General Jackson ordered General Hill to advance with his division, reserving his fire unless cavalry approached from the direction of the enemy." But wherefore this order? It required General Hill to advance in the face of a foe, and if he saw infantry charging down upon him he was to withhold his fire, and let that foe pour in his rounds with impunity. Or if he saw a battery wheel into position in good musket range, he was to withhold his fire and let the battery have a good, unopposed aim upon him; but, if cavalry approached from the direction of the enemy then he was to blaze away. Now can any man in his senses be justified in believing that any such order as that was ever given? Does it not bear upon its face the marks of a pure invention to give color to the idea that Jackson was killed by his own men? Jackson was upon the point of riding out, in company with his staff and escort, in front of his own lines to reconnoitre. Would it not be natural before going to caution General Hill about firing into a cavalcade as they might, possibly, in the gathering shades, do injury to himself? But what possible object could he have in giving positive orders to *withhold* fire, if infantry or artillery approached from the direction of the enemy, and *deliver* it upon cavalry? Neither General Hill nor General Lane, who commanded the brigade covering the plank road, make any mention in their official reports of any such order. It is evident that Hotchkiss and Allen give no credence to such an order having been given, for they do not repeat it in their book.

This writer also states that Colonel Crutchfield was wounded by



this volley, which killed Captain Boswell and two couriers, and wounded Jackson. Was Colonel Crutchfield of this party at all? Was he not at this time directing the fire of his artillery, posted near Melzi Chancellor's, upon Pleasanton's artillery at Hazel Grove? and did he not receive his injury at that point?

The statement is also made that "he [Jackson] fell from his horse, and was caught by Captain Wormly, to whom he said, 'All my wounds are by my own men!'" Was it in the nature of Jackson to have spoken in this reproachful way of, and to his own men? Could any word from the lips of Jackson have carried with it any more keen or stinging remorse to a true soldier and a sensitive mind? This utterance also we notice is not referred to by Hotchkiss and Allen.

But the most remarkable fact stated in this whole tissue of wonders is this: "The firing was responded to by the enemy, who made a sudden advance; and the Confederates, falling back, their foes actually charged over Jackson's body. He was not discovered, however, and the Federals being driven back in turn, he was rescued." The Confederates probably fell back, that is, ran and left their fallen leader bleeding, to be run over and captured by the Federals, out of consideration for, and obedience to the order of Jackson, which required them to withhold their fire for everything except cavalry charging, which they were to give no quarter. It was a bright moonlight night. Would the Federals have been likely to have charged over a lieutenant-general, and his dead and wounded staff, and not noticed them, or known who they were trampling under foot? Do any of the reports of Union officers mention any such charge having been made on this part of the field at this particular hour? Neither Sickles nor Williams mention such an advance. Besides, who were the Confederate poltroons who could possibly be guilty of such cowardice and shameful disregard of duty as to run and leave their general, wounded and dying, to fall into the hands of the enemy? It is observable, too, that Hotchkiss and Allen make no mention of this extraordinary mishap of their general.

If now we return from these statements, which seem to rest upon no other authority than the word of the narrators (for, as we have

observed, even Hotchkiss and Allen, guarded as they are, give no authorities), to the official reports of the officers who were on the front, and ought to know of so important an event as the killing of their general, what do we find? The brigade of General James H. Lane, of A. P. Hill's corps, was on the rebel front, on both sides of the plank road, at the point where General Jackson made his reconnoissance. This is the language of his official report: "After it was ascertained that the enemy were rapidly falling back, it [Lane's brigade] pushed forward with the artillery beyond the third and second lines to within a short distance of the first. Here General A. P. Hill ordered me, at dark, to deploy one regiment as skirmishers across the road, to form line of battle in rear with the rest of the brigade, and to push vigorously forward. In other words, we were ordered \* to make a night attack, and capture the enemy's batteries in front if possible. Just then they opened a terrific artillery fire, which was responded to by our batteries. As soon as this was over, I deployed the Thirty-third North Carolina troops forward as skirmishers, and formed line of battle to the rear, the Seventh and Thirty-seventh to the right, the Eighteenth and Twenty-eighth to the left, the left of the Thirty-seventh and right of the Eighteenth resting on the road. I had moved forward the Eighteenth and Twenty-eighth to within a short distance of our line of skirmishers, and was about to move the Seventh and Thirty-seventh to a corresponding position before ordering the whole line forward, when Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, of a Pennsylvania regiment, entered our lines with a white flag, and wished to know if we were Confederate or Union troops. Considering this an illegitimate use of the white flag, as he expressly stated it was not his object to surrender, and not wishing to let him return, I sent Lieutenant Lane to General A. P. Hill to know what I should do. Our skirmishers on the right soon after fired upon a few of the enemy, who had approached tolerably near, and a few random shots were fired by the Seventh and Thirty-seventh regiments, without orders, which appear to have drawn the enemy's artillery and infantry fire. I understand

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\* This order, as will be seen, is in the very teeth of the order reputed to have been given to Hill by Jackson, "to reserve his fire unless cavalry approached from the direction of the enemy."

from the official report of the commanding officer of the Eighteenth North Carolina troops, that General A. P. Hill, staff and couriers, were in the road in advance of them at the time, and to avoid the enemy's fire some of them dashed into the woods, over the Eighteenth regiment, which fired into them, mistaking them in the dark for the enemy's cavalry." Thus it will be seen that General Lane, who was in immediate command of the five regiments which were upon the ground from which Jackson made his reconnoissance, and the only rebel troops at this time upon this part of the field, and who made his report from his own knowledge and from the reports of his regimental commanders, knew nothing of Jackson being wounded by his own men. He records the fact that General Hill and escort were fired into by mistake, but not a word is said about any such mistake having been made in the case of Jackson. If so important a fact had transpired in connection with the operations of his troops, would not he or some one of his regimental commanders have been likely to have known it? General Hill, who of course founded his report upon those of his brigade commanders, says: "Whilst Lane's brigade was forming its lines for advancing, and throwing out his skirmishers, General Jackson was wounded." And this is absolutely all that he says upon the subject. He mentions the fact that Jackson was wounded, while Lane was "forming his lines for advancing and throwing out his skirmishers." He does not state that by a mistake Lane's troops fired upon Jackson's cavalcade, from which fire the general received his mortal wound. If such had been the fact, would he not have known it? Would it not have been reported to him from the part of the line where it occurred, and would he not have given a particular description of the event occurring in his own line?

General Jackson's conversation, from the time he received his wound until his last moments, have been minutely recorded, as we shall show; but no word is he reported to have uttered in regard to the circumstances of his wounding. To a man so magnanimous, and tender-hearted, and thoughtful as Jackson, would it not have been in keeping with his character, if he had been wounded by his own men, to have expressed his regard for them as soldiers, knowing, as he did, that they were acting with the greatest intrepidity

and courage, and in a manner worthy of troops whom he had trained, and who had earned and preserved a place in his own great corps? How grateful the recollection of such words would have been to those troops, if they had really done what is imputed to them. But no such words are reported to have been spoken.

Jackson may have been wounded by his own men, as is alleged; but the silence of those in authority, who ought to know, and could speak officially, throws a shade of doubt over the testimony, and the fact that a portion of the circumstances attending it are so manifestly unreliable, tends to deepen the doubt. The probabilities are that Jackson believed the whole Union army was in retreat. Indeed he said so. "There is no danger. The enemy is routed. Go back and tell General Hill to press on." It is natural, therefore, to suppose that he rode forward with confidence, not anticipating any determined stand to be made, and when he came upon the line of Berry, already settled behind barricades, his cavalcade received a crash of musketry that was as appalling as it was unanticipated.

Dr. Hunter Maguire, medical director of the corps, has recorded many interesting particulars respecting the last hours of the general, which are given by his biographers and by writers upon this battle. The account by Hotchkiss and Allen, as being the most connected and complete, will be chiefly followed in the condensed account we can here give. When Dr. Maguire came up to the wounded chieftain, "the doctor knelt down by him and said, 'I hope you are not badly hurt, General.' He replied, very calmly, but feebly: 'I am badly injured, doctor; I fear I am dying.' After a pause, he continued: 'I am glad you have come. I think the wound in my shoulder is still bleeding.'" General Hill had placed a ligature around the arm above the wound to stop the bleeding, but it had slipped and the flow of blood from the broken artery was still proceeding, and he was already greatly weakened from its loss. "His suffering at this time was intense. His hands were cold, his skin clammy, his face pale, and his lips compressed and bloodless." Colonel Crutchfield, who had been severely wounded in the leg, was with him in the ambulance, for whom the general expressed the deepest sympathy. They were taken back to the corps hospital at Wilderness tavern, where the general was placed in blankets and

given stimulants; but so great was the exhaustion that two or three hours elapsed before sufficient reaction had taken place to justify an examination. As soon as he was in a condition to warrant it, he was told that an anesthetic would be administered and his wounds examined, and was asked if amputation of his arm was found necessary, which was probable, if the operation should be performed. "Yes, certainly," he replied. "Dr. Maguire, do for me whatever you think best." The ball from a Springfield musket, which had entered his right hand and lodged under the skin upon its back, was first removed. The left arm had received two severe wounds, one about three inches below the shoulder, by which the bone had been fractured and the artery severed. In the other a ball had entered the forearm, just below the elbow, and made its way diagonally through, issuing upon the other side near the wrist. This arm was quickly amputated just below the shoulder, and with slight loss of blood. He slept several hours, was free from pain, and seemed to be doing well. His aide-de-camp, Morrison, was sent to convey to his wife the tidings of his injuries, and to bring her to see him. A note from General Lee was read to him expressive of his sorrow and sympathy, and congratulating the wounded general upon the victory gained by his "skill and energy." To which he immediately responded, "General Lee should give the praise to God." At ten o'clock on Sunday morning he complained of a severe pain in his right side, and asked to have it examined, believing he had injured it in falling from the litter the night before, striking upon a stone or stump of a sapling. But no outward indications of injury could be discovered. The battle had been raging with great fury, and the ceaseless roar of infantry and artillery, which, even here, could be faintly heard, arrested his attention, and he directed all of his attendants, except Captain Smith, to return to the battle-field, and attend to their several duties, thus evincing his deep interest in the triumph of his troops, even in intense suffering. "By eight o'clock on Sunday night the pain in his side had disappeared, and in all respects he seemed to be doing well. He inquired minutely about the battle and the different troops engaged, and his face would light up with enthusiasm and interest when told how this brigade acted, or that officer displayed conspicuous courage, and his head gave the

peculiar shake from side to side, and he uttered his usual, 'Good, good,' with unwonted energy, when the gallant behavior of the Stonewall brigade was alluded to. He said: 'The men of the brigade will be some day proud to say to their children, "I was one of the Stonewall brigade." He disclaimed any right of his own to the name Stonewall. 'It belongs to the brigade and not to me.'"

Apprehension was entertained by General Lee that Jackson might fall into the hands of the Union troops, who were threatening to cross at Ely's ford; but Jackson expressed a willingness to remain in his tent, and added: "If the enemy do come, I am not afraid of them. I have always been kind to their wounded, and I am sure they will be kind to me." In compliance with the repeated wish of General Lee, early on Tuesday morning he was taken by ambulance to the Chandler House at Guinea Station. He was cheerful and apparently bore the journey well. He expressed a curious opinion about the battle, which was now over, to the effect that he had intended to cut the Union troops off from the river by United States ford, and taking position between the bulk of the Union army and the river, oblige it to attack him. This shows that he had little conception of the real situation of Hooker's army. For at the instant the Eleventh corps began to give way, Sykes' division of the Fifth corps had been pushed out on the Ely's ford road, covering United States ford, and at about the same hour the First corps was beginning to arrive on the field, and before morning Hooker had a strong stretch of works on the interior line extending from the Rapidan to the Rappahannock, and manned by the First and Fifth corps; so that after encountering the Third and Twelfth corps, as his troops did on the following morning, he would still have been obliged to fight two strong fresh corps before he would have cut the Union army from United States ford.

In alluding to his wounds, he said: "Many would regard them as a great misfortune; I regard them as one of the blessings of my life." Captain Smith replied, "All things work together for good to those that love God." "Ycs," he answered, "that's it, that's it." He ate with a relish and slept, and his wounds were thought to be doing well. So great confidence was inspired in the breast of the general by these favorable symptoms, that he asked the surgeon how

long he judged it would be before he could again take the field. He had once or twice suffered from nausea, but a cold application had relieved him. At daylight on the morning of Thursday, however, he suffered great pain, and an examination disclosed pneumonia of the right lung, caused, doubtless, by the fall from the litter. Towards evening he was better, and strong hopes were cherished of his ultimate recovery. His wife arrived on the same day, and her presence with their young child, which he called his "little comforter," was a source of great joy and satisfaction to him. "Noticing the sadness of his wife, he said to her tenderly, 'I know you would gladly give your life for me, but I am perfectly resigned. Do not be sad. I hope I may recover. Pray for me, but always remember in your prayers to use the petition, 'Thy will be done.''" His wounds were dressed on Friday, and seemed to be healing, the pain in his side had subsided, but he breathed with difficulty and complained of exhaustion. "He said to Dr. Maguire, 'I see by the number of physicians that you think my condition dangerous; but I thank God, if it is his will, that I am ready to go.' About daylight on Sunday morning, Mrs. Jackson informed him that his recovery was very doubtful, and that it was better he should be prepared for the worst. He was silent for a moment, and then said, 'It will be infinite gain to be translated to heaven.'" He, however, had hope of his recovery still, but desired, in the event of his death, to be buried at Lexington, in the Valley of Virginia. "His exhaustion increased so rapidly that at eleven o'clock Mrs. Jackson knelt by his bed and told him that before the sun went down he would be with his Saviour. He replied, 'Oh, no, you are frightened, my child: death is not so near. I may yet get well.' She fell over upon the bed, weeping bitterly, and told him again that the physicians said there was no hope. After a moment's pause he asked her to call Dr. Maguire, who was standing in the ante-room. 'Doctor, Anna informs me that you have told her that I am to die to-day; is it so?' When he was answered he turned his eyes towards the ceiling, and gazed for a moment or two, as if in intense thought, then replied, 'Very good, very good, it is all right.' . . . Colonel Pendleton came into the room about one o'clock, and he asked him, 'Who is preaching at headquarters to-day?' When

told that the whole army was praying for him, he replied, 'Thank God, they are very kind.' He said, 'It is the Lord's day; my wish is fulfilled. I have always desired to die on Sunday.' His mind now began to fail and wander, and he frequently talked as if in command upon the field, giving orders in his old way; then the scene shifted, and he was at the mess-table with members of his staff; now with his wife and child; now at prayers with his military family. Occasional intervals of the return of his mind would appear, and during one of these he was offered some brandy and water, but he declined it, saying, 'It will only delay my departure, and do no good. I want to preserve my mind, if possible, to the last.' About half-past one he was told that he had but two hours to live, and he answered again, feebly but firmly, 'Very good, it is all right.' A few moments before he died, he cried out in his delirium, 'Order A. P. Hill to prepare for action—pass the infantry to the front rapidly—tell Major Hawks—' then stopped, leaving the sentence unfinished. Presently a smile of ineffable sweetness spread itself over his pale face, and he said quietly, and with an expression, as if of relief, 'Let us cross over the river, and rest under the shade of the trees.' And then without pain, or the least struggle, his spirit passed from earth to the God who gave it."

Thomas Jonathan (Stonewall) Jackson was born on the 24th of January, 1824, at Clarksburg, Harrison county, West Virginia. Glowing with youthful ardor for the profession of arms, he threaded his way on foot to Washington, where he sought and received the appointment of a cadet at West Point, entering in 1842 and graduating in 1846, the seventeenth in a class of fifty-nine, which embraced George B. McClellan, John G. Foster, Jesse L. Reno, Darius N. Couch, Albert L. Majilton, Truman Seymour, Samuel D. Sturgis, George Stoueman, Innis N. Palmer, Alfred Gibbs, and George H. Gordon, of the Union army, and John A. Brown, John Adams, William D. Smith, Dabney H. Maury, David R. Jones, Cadmus M. Wilcox, William M. Gardner, Samuel B. Maxy, and George E. Pickett, of the rebel army, all of whom attained to distinction. Jackson was appointed brevet second lieutenant of the First Artillery at graduation, and scarcely had he become inured to the service before the Mexican war broke out—that training school for so



many of the eminent soldiers in the War of Rebellion—in which he served with distinction to the close, rising to the rank of brevet major. It was during his service here that he manifested some of those striking eccentricities which were remarked throughout his whole career, and which are mentioned by his companions in arms, and are alluded to by some of his biographers. A strange hallucination caused him to stoutly maintain that all the nourishment of one of his legs entered it at the expense of the other.

Upon his return from Mexico he was appointed to the chair of natural and experimental philosophy and artillery practice, in the Virginia State military institute, at Lexington, where he continued until the breaking out of the rebellion. In a conversation with General Jackson's father-in-law, the late George Junkin, D. D., LL. D., who was President of Washington College while Jackson was a professor, he bore testimony to his unswerving and devout attention to all his public and private religious obligations, though his faculties in prayer and exhortation were almost morbidly sluggish. He never absented himself from the prayer and conference meetings of his college, and his church, and considered it his duty always to take part; but often stumbling and stammering in a manner to excite the commiseration and sympathy of every one present. At the breaking out of the rebellion he was given an independent command by Governor Letcher, of Virginia, where he organized the brigade with which his name was identified; but was soon after superseded in the chief command by General Joseph E. Johnston, under Confederate authority. His service in the first battle of Bull Run, where he earned the soubriquet of "Stonewall," and his subsequent brilliant career in the Shenandoah Valley, attracted the attention of his friends, and intensified the fear of his foes. At Gaines' mills, and the fighting incident to McClellan's noted change of base, at Cedar Mountain, Manassas, Harper's Ferry, Antietam, and Fredericksburg, he was the right arm of the army of Northern Virginia, and smote with terrible earnestness. At Chancellorsville was his characteristic and largest operation, and the one ever memorable as his last.

**THE CHARGE OF KEENAN.**—One of the bravest and most daring charges ever made on any field was that of Major Keenan, and the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry, at dusk on the 2d of May. Major Carpenter, who rode with Keenan in this hopeless but necessary sacrifice, has furnished an extract from his diary, which gives a more definite idea of the exploit than was possible to give in the regular narrative of the battle. Of the circumstances attending the call for the charge, General Pleasanton has put on record a statement in his report to the Committee on the Conduct of the War. "Jackson," he says, "had been moving his corps of twenty-five or thirty thousand men through the woods throughout the day of the 2d of May, 1863, from the left to the right of our army, and about six o'clock in the evening he struck the right and rear of the Eleventh corps with one of those characteristic attacks, that made the rebel army so terrible when he was with it, and which was lost to them in his death. In a very short time he doubled up the Eleventh corps into a disordered mass that soon sought safety in flight. My command of three cavalry regiments, and one battery of six guns, happened to be near this scene, and, perceiving at a glance that if this rout was not checked the ruin of the whole army would be involved, I immediately ordered one of the regiments to charge the woods from which the rebels were issuing, and hold them until I could bring some guns into position; then charging several squadrons into our flying masses to clear ground for my battery, it was brought up at a run, while staff officers and troops were dispatched to seize from the rout all the guns possible. The brilliant charge of the regiment into the woods detained the rebels some ten minutes; but in that short time, such was the energy displayed by my command, that I placed in line twenty-two pieces of artillery, double-shotted with canister, and aimed low, with the remainder of the cavalry supporting them."

It was at that juncture in the progress of the fight, when the enemy, having put to flight the entire Eleventh corps, was following up the advantage gained in dense masses, with the confidence of assured victory and with the expectation of routing other corps with the same ease that he had done the Eleventh, that this regiment was led to the charge in the face of the oncoming legions.

Colonel Huey, who commanded the regiment, was not at hand for the instant, but Major Keenan, who commanded one of the battalions, was, and to him the order was given. "I heard," says Carpenter, "Pleasanton instructing Keenan to be careful and not 'blow' his horses by moving too rapidly, and Keenan gave all the orders that I heard. He ordered my squadron to 'draw sabre' and 'charge.' Colonel Huey, however, rode at the head of the column, immediately in front of me and beside Keenan. Major Keenan was a remarkably fine officer, and always ready for an emergency." The diary of Major Carpenter, from which I am permitted to quote, contains the following graphic account of this now celebrated charge: "On the morning of May 2d the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry returned to its brigade, and with the Seventeenth Pennsylvania cavalry was formed in an open field in the rear of Sickles' line of battle. Here the brigade dismounted and were quietly awaiting the moment when General Sickles' sharpshooters, who were steadily driving the enemy before them, should reach the Fredericksburg turnpike, when it was understood that the brigade under Pleasanton would push forward, charge down the road, and harass the rear of the enemy's column, which, it was believed, was in retreat towards Gordonsville. The proper point had nearly been reached, and the brigade stood in momentary expectation of mounting and moving to the front, when a staff officer from General Howard dashed up to General Pleasanton, with the news that a fierce attack had been made on the right of the line, and that Howard's corps was being driven back, and with a request from General Howard\* that a regiment of cavalry be sent to stop and rally the panic-stricken troops. This officer was followed by another of Hooker's staff with directions to send the regiment required. The Eighth Pennsylvania was selected, and ordered to take a narrow wood road—with room only for two

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\* In General Sickles' testimony he says: "In a minute or two another messenger, an officer who announced himself as an aide-de-camp of General Howard, and who seemed to be much more methodical and self-possessed in his communication, arrived," etc. In his official report Sickles says: "I confess I did not credit this statement (that Howard was in rout) until an aide-de-camp of General Warren of General Hooker's staff confirmed the report and asked for a regiment of cavalry to check the movement." This aide-de-camp of Warren is the one probably referred to by Carpenter as Hooker's.

horsemen to ride abreast—which ran parallel with Williams' interior line of battle facing west. This wood road terminated at the Orange plank road, at a point some distance in the rear of Howard's line of battle.

"After proceeding along this road at a gallop, until they were about half way between the point from which they had started and the Orange plank road, it was discovered that the enemy had advanced, and that their skirmish line occupied the woods on the right hand side of the road, while their line of battle was plainly visible through the trees, not more than seventy yards distant on the left! At this time the position of the regiment was extremely critical. It was marching by twos, at a gallop, in a narrow road with the enemy on both sides, subjected to a destructive fire, with no possibility of turning back without utter confusion! Major Keenan, who commanded the First battalion, realizing the desperate strait into which they had fallen, called upon the First squadron to stand by him, and ordered them to 'draw sabre,' and 'charge!' Reaching the plank road, and turning to the left, this squadron was precipitated directly upon Jackson's rebel infantry, literally sacrificing itself. It did its work nobly! Nearly one-half of the men of the squadron were either killed or wounded. Five officers rode at the head of the column, Colonel Huey, Major Keenan, Captain Arrowsmith, Lieutenant Carpenter, and Adjutant Haddock. Of these only two escaped with their lives—Colonel Huey, and Lieutenant Carpenter, and the horse of the latter was subsequently shot. The other three officers were killed. The effect of this bold dash was to alarm the enemy and check his advance. Time enough was thus secured to extricate the regiment from its perilous position. Captain Wistar, with the Sixth squadron, was obliged to make his way through the woods to the right, he and his men leaping their horses over the barricades and rifle-pits of an interior\* line which had been thrown up by our infantry. Captain Wistar's horse was shot. In the meantime Martin's battery had been enabled to get into position, and to open upon the enemy—a nucleus upon which other artillery and troops formed sufficient to check permanently the

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\* Probably the barricades of Williams' division, which had been left in the afternoon to make the flank movement with Sickles upon Lee.

advance of Jackson's column. Private Eckenbrine, of Company L, a youth not twenty years of age, distinguished himself in the charge of the First squadron, showing great bravery and intrepidity. He escaped unhurt."

A far more graphic and circumstantial account of this matchless charge of cavalry has since been prepared for me by Major Carpenter.\* The occasion of its preparation was my application to him for such a description, as would enable an artist to paint the wild dash and mortal struggle, for an embellishment to the biographical sketch of Major Keenan, contained in "Martial Deeds of Pennsylvania." But as the drawing was never made to my satisfaction, I give the sketch of Major Carpenter, together with the flat drawing just as he prepared it, trusting to the imagination of the reader to supply the life—the dusky lines of rebel infantry, their faces stained with the smoke and dust of the fray, their muskets black with exposure to the elements and ceaseless use, and the charging squadron dashing down the narrow wood road until it found itself between the two hostile lines, and then plunging upon the very heart and centre of Jackson's corps. The note is as follows: "I have never felt before the need of the talent of drawing, of which I am entirely devoid, so keenly as I do now. Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to transfer to paper, or canvas, the vivid impression of the Chancellorsville charge, which I have in my mind. The engraving, if it is to be inserted in your work, ought to be as true as the nature of the case will admit. A *sensational* picture, drawn from imagination, would be worse than none, in my opinion.

"I can give you my impressions, as they are stamped on my mind, but I know of no one here to whom I could apply to have the draw-

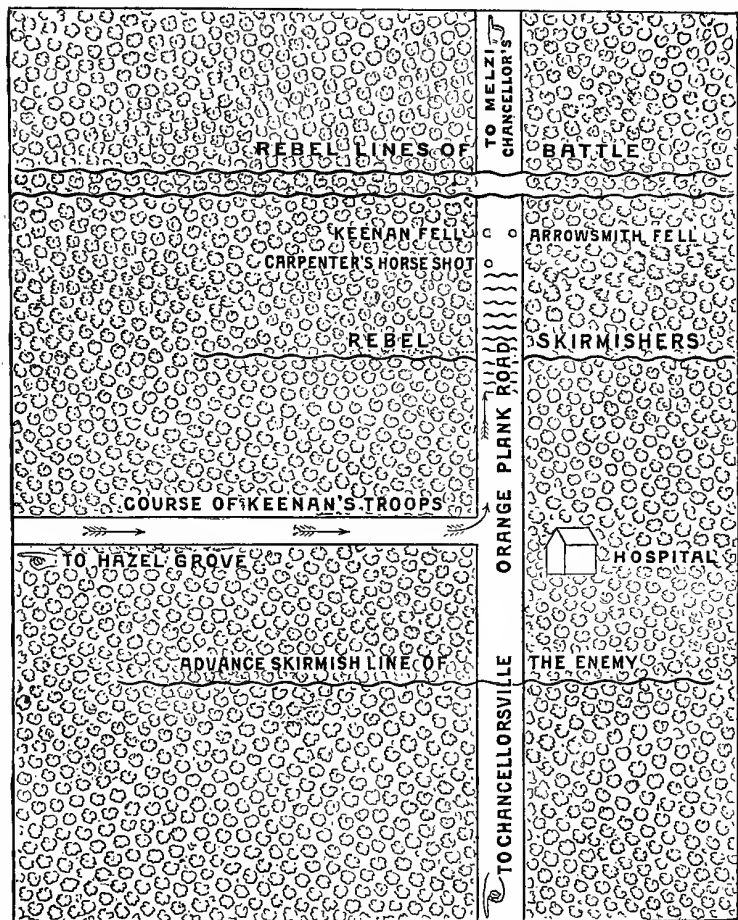
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\* James Edward Carpenter, who had the command of the leading squadron in this ever memorable charge of the Eighth Pennsylvania cavalry, was born in Kent county, Maryland, being descended from a family of English Quakers, which emigrated to America shortly after the arrival of William Penn in this country. He was educated in the academic department of the University of Pennsylvania, and at the breaking out of the rebellion was a student at law in the office of Theodore Cuyler, Esq., of Philadelphia. He served with credit for a term of three years with the Eighth cavalry. Since the war he has practised his profession, and is a prominent member of the Pennsylvania Historical Society.

ing made. The general features are these: Keenan rode in advance on a black horse. I saw him fall. He was actually among the bayonets of the enemy, in their line of battle, which was badly thrown out of order by our charge. He fell forward, pitching headlong in the direction of the enemy, and in the direction in which his horse was moving. Captain Arrowsmith rode a bay horse, and fell with his horse, both horse and rider sinking down together. Both Keenan and Arrowsmith were slightly in advance of me, Arrowsmith on the right of the road, and Keenan still slightly in advance of him on the left. Huey rode with us when we turned into the Orange plank road, and took the charge; but I cannot remember him afterwards. Haddock rode about opposite me. He was alive when my horse was shot, about the time that Keenan and Arrowsmith fell, but I cannot now remember clearly whether I saw him fall. I do not remember seeing him after I turned to fall back. About the moment that Keenan and Arrowsmith were shot, my horse received a ball squarely in his breast—cutting his breast strap—which caused him to rear up almost perpendicularly, and throw himself directly around facing the rear. This gave me an opportunity to see what terrible havoc had been going on among the men of my squadron, who were lying in great profusion in the road, the survivors using their sabres upon the enemy who were among and around us, on the sides of the road and in the woods. We had pierced entirely through their skirmish line, and were mixed up indiscriminately with their line of battle, which I have since learned was three lines deep—that is, six ranks. •

“Undoubtedly the time for your drawing should be the moment of Keenan’s and Arrowsmith’s fall. That was the climax of the charge. A moment afterwards the charge was spent, and our men were breaking to the right and left in retreat. At that moment the charge was at its height, not a man had turned, and every horse was at the height of his speed. The enemy in our immediate neighborhood were stricken with terror. Many offered to surrender; but it was impossible to listen to them. I remember distinctly seeing one of the enemy offer his musket to one of my men, but his head was split open with a sabre in the very act, and by the man to whom he wanted to surrender. Following is a rough draft of the situation.

"The position of the small white house which had been used as a hospital may not be quite correct. I cannot remember which side of the small road it was—whether towards the enemy or towards



Chancellorsville. Of course, in a general plan of this kind, I cannot show the mixed-up state of the enemy and our troops. They were intermingled—gray and blue."

Three officers, fifty-six men, and ninety-two horses were sacrificed

in the flashings of that terrible strife, out of less than two hundred who made the perilous charge. By that daring plunge the whole corps of Jackson was checked, and the rout of the Union army, which was strongly threatened, was averted. Keenan was a powerful man, and just before he fell he was flourishing his sabre with unexampled rapidity, in the very midst of, and hand-to-hand with the enemy. The record of so brilliant a charge, led in the face of such hopeless prospects,—nay, certain destruction—made with all the assurance of a certain victory, and with the courage of men fighting on equal terms, has few parallels in the records of heroic daring. “No man,”\* says DePeyster, “has ever laid sufficient stress upon this turning point of Chancellorsville, nor given due credit to that brigadier-general of cavalry, who, after displaying a consummate tact in the selection of a position, and even greater capacity in the massing and handling of artillery, with the magical influence of a superlative manhood, which could convert a few hundred troopers into an impassable barrier of human determination, and by a single will hold up his scanty force, like a wall, in that desperate fight—not of minutes, but of an hour—converting a rout into the equivalent of a victory. But the hero of that supreme hour and effort was Peter Keenan; and Pennsylvania owes him a grander monument than any the State has yet erected, or contemplates erecting.”

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\* “Onward,” Dec., 1869, p. 483.



## APPENDIX.

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## ORDERS, TELEGRAMS AND TESTIMONY.

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### GENERAL ORDER OF THE WAR DEPARTMENT, January 25, 1863.

I. The President of the United States has directed :

*First.* That Major-General A. E. Burnside, at his own request, be relieved from the command of the army of the Potomac.

*Second.* That Major-General E. V. Sumner, at his own request, be relieved from duty in the army of the Potomac.

*Third.* That Major-General W. B. Franklin be relieved from duty in the army of the Potomac.

*Fourth.* That Major-General J. Hooker be assigned to the command of the army of the Potomac.

II. The officers relieved, as above, will report, in person, to the adjutant-general of the army.

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### GENERAL ORDER OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, No. 1, January 26, 1863.

By direction of the President of the United States, the undersigned assumes command of the army of the Potomac. He enters upon the discharge of his duties with a just appreciation of the responsibilities which they impose. Since the formation of that army he has been identified with its history. He has shared with his comrades in its glories and reverses with no other desire than that these relations might remain unchanged until its destiny should be accomplished. In the record of our achievements there is much to be proud of, and with the blessing of God we will contribute something to the renown of our arms, and the success of our cause. To secure these ends your commander will require the cheerful and zealous co-operation of every officer and soldier. In equipment, intelligence, and valor the enemy is our inferior. Let us never hesitate to give him battle wherever we can find him. The undersigned only gives expression to the feelings of the army when he conveys to its late commander, Major-General Burnside, the most cordial good wishes for his future.

J. HOOKER.

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### HALLECK TO HOOKER, RESPECTING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE ARMY, January 31, 1863.

In regard to the operations of your own army, you can best judge

when and where it can move to the greatest advantage, keeping in view always the importance of covering Washington and Harper's Ferry, either directly, or by so operating as to be able to punish any force of the enemy sent against them.

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GENERAL ORDERS, No. 3, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, January 30, 1863.

The following rules will govern officers empowered to grant leaves of absence:

I. No leave will exceed fifteen days.

II. Leaves to commanders of corps, divisions, and cavalry brigades will only be granted upon approval at these headquarters. One brigade commander only in a corps to be on leave at one time.

III. Not more than one field officer of a regiment to be absent on leave at one time, where the full complement of field officers is present. When less than that number, leaves to be granted only in extreme cases.

IV. Not more than two line officers to be given leave from any regiment at the same time. Not more than one from any battery or detachment.

V. Leaves not to exceed ten days except to residents of the following States, when it may be given for fifteen days, viz.: Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont; Ohio, Michigan, and the States west of these last named.

VI. Furloughs to enlisted men must in no case exceed two for every one hundred men present for duty in the regiment, battery, or detachment, and not to be granted to any men, but those having the most excellent record for attention to all duties.

VII. In case of the failure of any officer or soldier to return before his leave expires, leaves will not be granted to others, from the same commands until his return. All applications will by endorsement or otherwise state the number of officers or men absent on leave from the command, and the failure to return of any person will be notified immediately to the provost-marshal-general, with a memoranda of the leave, residence of the party, and description of enlisted men.

VIII. A return from each regiment, battery, and detachment will be forwarded to these headquarters within eight days from the date of this order, showing the number of officers and men absent from duty, from any cause whatever.

IX. Under the head of "remarks" for all enlisted men absent will be given a complete description, age, height, etc., etc.; where enlisted; whether or not dropped from the rolls—when and where deserted—where supposed to be—furloughed, detailed at hospital, where, etc., etc.

X. Under the head of remarks for officers, when the absence is of such a nature as to cause dismissal from service, it should be so stated that action may be taken thereon.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. 12, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, February 19, 1863.

The attention of the officers and men of this army is directed to the general order of the President of November 15, 1862, and to general order No. 7, of September 6, 1861, from these headquarters respecting the observance of the Sabbath. The major-general commanding enjoins a strict compliance with the requirements of those orders upon all under his command.

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HOOKE TO STONEMAN, April 12, 1863, COMMANDING CAVALRY CORPS.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that you will march at 7 o'clock A. M. on the 13th inst., with all your available force, except one brigade, for the purpose of turning the enemy's position on his left, and of throwing your command between him and Richmond, isolating him from his supplies, checking his retreat and inflicting on him every possible injury which will tend to his discomfiture and defeat.

To accomplish this, the general suggests that you ascend the Rappahannock by the different routes, keeping well out of the view of the enemy, and throwing out well to the front and flank small parties to mask your movement, and to cut off all communication with the enemy by the people in their interest living on this side of the river. To divert suspicion, it may not be amiss to have word given out that you are in pursuit of Jones' guerillas, as they are operating extensively in the Shenandoah Valley, in the direction of Winchester. He further suggests that you select for your place of crossing the Rappahannock some point to the west of the Alexandria and Orange railroad, which can only be determined by the circumstances as they are found on the arrival of your advance.

In the vicinity of Culpeper you will be likely to run against Fitzhugh Lee's brigade of cavalry, consisting of about two thousand men, which it is expected you will be able to disperse and destroy without delay to your advance, or detriment to any considerable number of your command. At Gordonsville the enemy have a small provost guard of infantry, which it is expected you will destroy, if it can be done without delaying your forward movement. From there it is expected that you will be able to push forward to the Acquia and Richmond railroad, somewhere in the vicinity of Saxton's junction, destroying along your whole route the railroad bridges, trains of cars, depots of provisions, lines of telegraphic communication. The general directs that you go prepared with all the means necessary to accomplish this work effectually.

As the line of railroad from Acquia to Richmond presents the shortest one for the enemy to retire on, it is more than probable that he will avail himself of it, and the usually travelled highways on each side of

it, for this purpose; in which event you will select the strongest positions, such as the banks of streams, commanding heights, etc., in order to check or prevent it, and if unsuccessful, you will fall upon his flanks, attack his artillery and trains, and harass him until he is exhausted and out of supplies. Moments of delay will be hours and days to the army in pursuit.

If the enemy should retire by Culpeper and Gordonsville, you will endeavor to hold your force in his front, and harass him day and night, on the march and in camp unceasingly. If you cannot cut off from his columns large slices the general desires that you will not fail to take small ones. Let your watchword be *fight*, and let all your orders be, fight, fight, fight, bearing in mind that time is as valuable to the general as the rebel carcasses. It is not in the power of the rebels to oppose you with more than five thousand sabres, and those badly mounted, and, after they leave Culpeper, without forage and rations. Keep them from Richmond, and sooner or later they must fall into our hands.

The general desires you to understand that he considers the primary object of your movement the cutting of the enemy's communication with Richmond by the Fredericksburg route, checking his retreat over those lines, and he wishes to make everything subservient to that object. He desires that you will keep yourself informed of the enemy's whereabouts, and attack him wherever you find him. If, in your operations, an opportunity should present itself for you to detach a force to Charlottesville, which is almost unguarded, and destroy depots of supplies said to be there, or along the line of the Acquia railroad in the direction of Richmond, to destroy the bridges, etc., or the crossings of the Pamunkey, in the direction of West Point, destroying the ferries, felling trees to prevent or check the crossing, they will all greatly contribute to our complete success. You may rely upon the general's being in communication with you before your supplies are exhausted. Let him hear from you as often as necessary and practicable.

A brigade of infantry will march to-morrow morning at eight o'clock for Kelly's ford, with one battery, and a regiment to United States ford and Bank's ford to threaten and hold those places. It devolves upon you, general, to take the initiative in the forward movement of this grand army, and on you and your noble command must depend, in a great measure, the extent and brilliancy of our success. Bear in mind that celerity, audacity, and resolution are everything in war, and especially is it the case with the command you have, and the enterprise on which you are about to embark.

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HOOVER TO STONEMAN, SUPPLEMENTAL ORDER, April 28, 1863.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that the instructions communicated for your government on the 12th inst. are so far modified as to require you to cross the Rappahannock at such

points as you may determine between Kelly's and Rappahannock fords, and for a portion of your force to move in the direction of the Raccoon ford and Louisa Court-House, while the remainder is engaged carrying into execution that part of your original instructions which relates to the enemy's forces and positions on the line of the Alexandria and Orange railroad, and the line itself; the operations of this column to be considered as masking the column which is directed to move by forced marches to strike and destroy the line of the Acquia and Richmond railroad.

You are further directed to determine on some point for the columns to unite, and it is recommended that it be at the Pamunkey, and near that line, as you will then be in position with your full force to cut off the retreat of the enemy by his shortest line. In all other respects your instructions, as before referred to, will remain the same. You will direct all your forces to cross to-night, or, if that shall not be practicable, to be brought to the river, and have it all thrown over before 8 o'clock to-morrow morning. If the fords should be too deep for your pack animals and artillery, they will be crossed over the bridge at Kelly's ford. You will please furnish the officers in command of these two columns with a copy of this, and of your original instructions.

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**HOOVER TO SLOCUM AND HOWARD, COMMANDERS OF TWELFTH AND ELEVENTH CORPS, April 26, 1863.**

I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that the Eleventh and Twelfth corps, in the order named, will begin their march at sunrise to-morrow morning; the former to encamp as near Kelly's ford as practicable without discovering itself to the enemy, and the latter as nearly in its rear as circumstances will permit. They will be established in their camps on or before 4 o'clock P. M. on Tuesday, the 28th inst. Corps commanders will be held responsible that the men are kept in camp and do not go to the river.

Each corps will march with one battery and two ambulances to a division and the pack train of small ammunition. If necessary, a small number of wagons can accompany the column to the camp with forage for animals. The balance of the trains will be parked in the vicinity of Bank's ford, off the road, and convenient to crossing the river at that point. The ammunition wagons and ambulances being in readiness to take the lead in the column, no extra guards for this part of the train will be required. Corps commanders can leave behind such men of those whose time of service is about to expire as they think proper, with such instructions for the safety of the camps and preservation of the public property as they may deem necessary. All property not removed with the troops must be turned in to the quartermaster. Corps commanders will consider so much of the above as relates to the destination of their commands as strictly confidential.

## HOOKER TO COUCH, COMMANDING SECOND CORPS, April 27, 1863.

The major-general commanding directs that you move at sunrise tomorrow morning two divisions of your corps, to encamp as near as practicable at Bank's ford, without exposing your camps to the view of the enemy. That one brigade and one battery of one of these two divisions take position at United States ford, the movement to be made quietly, the officers and men restrained from exhibiting themselves, or making any show or appearance upon the river beyond the necessities of picket duty. The division left in camp should be the one whose camps are most exposed to the view of the enemy. All of the artillery attached to the two divisions moving up the river must move with them, and be ready to be thrown into position to cover the passage of the river, and to drive the enemy from his defences thrown up opposite that point. Two ambulances to each division will move with them, and a few wagons only allowed, to carry sufficient forage for the animals for four or five days. The pack mule train, for small-arm ammunition, will move with the column, or, in lieu of it, General Couch having none organized, a reserve of ammunition in wagons, to be kept out of the way of troops and the communications, ready to move forward if needed. The troops will have the (eight days) rations heretofore provided in orders. The trains left will be parked to the rear of the Falmouth station, and out of sight of the enemy, and out of the way of the business of the station. The division left in camp will be directed to keep up the picket line on the river, and in readiness to repel any attempt that may be made by the enemy to cross the river. Should the demonstration of the enemy prove of sufficient strength to indicate such a purpose, the Third corps will be available for support. The division left in camp, as well as the division at Bank's and United States fords, will be held in readiness to follow up any successful movements without delay. In moving from camp or breaking camps the practice of large fires and burning camp rubbish will not be permitted. If there are any two years men that you consider unreliable in consequence of the near expiration of their term of service, you will leave them on duty with the division left behind. The commanding general desires that you command in person the two divisions going up the river.

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HOOKER TO MEADE, COMMANDING FIFTH CORPS, April 27, 1863—  
1 A. M.

The major-general commanding directs me to inform you that your corps is to march to-morrow, so as to reach the vicinity of Kelly's ford by Tuesday at 4 P. M. The corps of Generals Slocum and Howard take the same direction (and will be on the same route probably) from Hartwood. The provisions as to rations in former circular (eight days) will be complied with. The trains will be left at the vicinity of Stoneman's switch. Such two years men as you may desire to leave for the purpose may remain with them as guards. Further details of the



orders will be sent you early to-morrow morning. Two ambulances and one battery only will accompany each division, with the pack train of small arm ammunition—a few wagons only to accompany the column, sufficient to carry forage for the animals. The destination of your command will be strictly confidential. General Couch has been directed to send a regiment to Bank's ford, to relieve your regiment there.

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HOOKER TO MEADE, COMMANDING FIFTH CORPS, MORRISVILLE, April 28, 1863.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to request that you will exercise all of your accustomed zeal and devotion in hastening the passage of the troops across the Rappahannock. He feels assured that you will. It is a great object to effect the passage of the Rapidan to-morrow, as you well know, and in so doing the United States ford will be uncovered, and our line of communication established with the left wing of the army. I enclose herewith copies of instructions to Major-General Slocum, to Brigadier-General Pleasanton, and Captain Comstock, and also reports of the strength of the enemy's forces holding fords on the Rappahannock above its junction with the Rapidan. I hope that you will be able to pick up some of them. Use your cavalry freely, and send them well out to bring you timely information. Would it not be well to detach a division to seize the ford? From the most reliable information in our possession the ford must be a good one now. The cavalry can ascertain. The general will join you as soon as he can, probably not until the United States ford is opened. A portion of Couch's corps now hold it on our side. The general will direct two aides-de-camp to report to you to furnish him with information. Use them freely. Brigadier-General Warren will report as soon as you cross the Rapidan.

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HOOKER TO SLOCUM, COMMANDING ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH CORPS, MORRISVILLE, April 28, 1863.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that so long as the Eleventh and Twelfth corps are operating on the same line, you will exercise the command of both. The general directs that the Eleventh corps cross to the opposite side of the river to-night, and that the Twelfth corps commence crossing at daylight to-morrow morning, and to be thrown over with all possible rapidity, and both corps march by the most direct route, without delay, and seize the bridge, if standing, and the ford at Germania mills. He suggests that you make use of a cavalry regiment and three or four smart marching regiments to execute this duty, and that you cross both of your corps over the Rapidan river to-morrow. You will find guides in General Pleasanton's cavalry.

Major-General Meade will move on almost a parallel line at the same time, and will be in easy communication with you. He will cross Ely's ford. If his passage should be disputed, as you will probably be able to learn from the firing, or through your communication with that officer, the general directs that you despatch a corps along the south bank of the Rapidan, to knock away the enemy to enable him to cross, and when the Fifth corps is across, that you push on with both of your corps to Chancellorsville, at which point the three corps will come together, and which you will command by virtue of your seniority. The enemy have a brigade holding the United States ford, which they will abandon as soon as they hear of your approach. This will open the United States ford to us, when bridges will at once be thrown across the river, and will afford you a direct communication with headquarters. Telegraphic communication is established from that point.

If your cavalry is well advanced from Chancellorsville you will be able to ascertain whether or not the enemy is detaching forces from behind Fredericksburg to resist your advance. If not in any considerable force, the general desires that you will endeavor to advance at all hazards, securing a position on the plank road, and uncovering Bank's ford, which is also defended by a brigade of rebel infantry and a battery. If the enemy should be greatly reinforced, you will then select a strong position, and compel him to attack you on your ground. You will have nearly forty thousand men, which is more than he can spare to send against you. Every incident of your advance you will communicate to the general as soon as communication is established by the United States ford. Two aides-de-camp are sent to report to you for the service. You are already advised of the operations going on below Fredericksburg. The general desires that not a moment be lost until our troops are established at or near Chancellorsville. From that moment all will be ours. A copy of this will be furnished Major-General Meade. It will be much easier to replenish batteries, ammunition, etc., by Bank's ford, than by the United States ford, if you should succeed in uncovering it.

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HOOVER TO SEDGWICK, COMMANDING SIXTH CORPS, April 27, 1863.

The major-general commanding directs that the Sixth corps, Major-General Sedgwick, First corps, Major-General Reynolds, Third corps, Major-General Sickles, put themselves in position to cross the river as follows: Sixth corps at Franklin's crossing, First corps at the crossing below, at Pollock's mill creek, the Third corps, as a support, to cross at either point. These movements to be made so that the respective corps are in position, the First and Sixth on or before 3½ A. M. of the 29th, the Third corps on or before 4½ A. M. of the 29th. The ambulances and trains to be parked in the rear, and concealed behind the range of hills visible to the enemy, and ready to move when desired. The troops, as far as possible, ought to be concealed up to the moment the demonstration is made.

Such batteries of the corps mentioned, and of the reserve artillery as are required, to be placed in position under the direction of the chief of artillery to cover the crossing. The orders of the chief of artillery for the necessary disposition of the batteries to carry out the purposes and plans of this movement will be complied with, and he will be charged with the responsibility of the duties intrusted to him. Trains will be loaded with supplies of forage and provisions, to include, at least, eight days' short forage for the animals. Whenever an opportunity occurs, without interference, the supplies that may have been consumed will be replaced. The troops will have the eight days' rations as heretofore provided in orders. The bridges, two at each crossing, to be laid complete before 3½ A. M. of the 29th, under the supervision of General Benham, who is charged with the responsibility thereof. Any troops needed to assist the engineer brigade in the performance of this duty will be furnished to General Benham, under the direction of General Sedgwick. General Sedgwick, pending the operation, will be charged with the command of the three corps mentioned, and will make a demonstration in full force on Wednesday morning upon the enemy's defences, with a view to securing the telegraph road.

In the event of the enemy detaching any considerable part of his force against the troops operating at the west of Fredericksburg, he will attack and carry their works at all hazards, and establish his force on the telegraph road, cutting off all communication by the enemy, in order to prevent their turning his position on that road. In case the enemy should fall back on Richmond, he will pursue them with the utmost vigor, fighting them whenever and wherever he can come up with them. The major-general commanding suggests that a part of his force be thrown on the Bowling Green road in case the enemy retire, and pursuit be made on both these lines. The columns, if they move with equal rapidity, will be within supporting distance, and should be required to march to each other's assistance as circumstances may require. The ammunition trains and ambulances will be held in readiness to move first. General Sedgwick will give such further instructions as may seem to him necessary to carry out the plans and wishes of the major-general commanding.

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HOOVER TO SEDGWICK, COMMANDING LEFT WING, April 30, 1863—  
8½ A. M.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to instruct you to make a demonstration on the enemy's lines in the direction of Hamilton's crossing at 1 o'clock, the object being simply to ascertain whether or not the enemy continues to hug his defences in full force, and if he should have abandoned them, to take possession of his works and the commanding ground in the vicinity. In his opinion a corps should be used for this service—a portion of it advanced, while the balance is held in supporting distance, and your whole force held in readiness to

spring to their relief should an effort be made to overpower them, or to cut them off. This demonstration will be made for no other purpose than that stated. The enemy must not be attacked behind his defences if held in force. No train but that of a few ambulances should accompany the column. As soon as the required information is obtained the column can return. Look well after the defences of your bridge heads during this movement. If you are certain that the enemy is in full force in your front, I am instructed by the commanding general to say that the demonstration herein directed will not be made. The general must know the position of affairs, and be advised fully; also as to what you do, at once. The enemy have at Hamilton's pontoon train. The general expects that you will not permit them to cross the river. When you move forward, if you want all your artillery, the batteries of the reserve here can be called for.

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HOOKER TO COUCH, COMMANDING THE SECOND CORPS, April 30,  
1863.

The major-general commanding directs me to inclose you copy of instructions to Generals Slocum and Meade. You are directed to cross as speedily as practicable with your infantry, artillery, ammunition wagons, and a few wagons for forage, and two ambulances to a division. You will have the bridge laid without delay as soon as the enemy leaves. Don't let a small force keep you back. Establish rapid communications with the telegraph at Bank's ford, and with Meade and Slocum, as the telegraph from Bank's to United States ford works so slow. You will move to support Slocum. Be careful that no trains cross at United States ford until further orders, as they will only be in the way. Meade's ammunition wagons may have to cross. The trains should cross at some point to be designated. The general directs me to add, in moving in support of Slocum, move towards the heaviest firing, in the event of his advance being disputed. The general wishes you to be up with him to-night.

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HOOKER TO SICKLES, COMMANDING THIRD CORPS, April 30, 1863—  
12.30 P. M.

Upon the receipt of this order you will proceed with your corps, without delay, by the shortest road, concealed from view of the enemy, to United States ford. The batteries taken from your command and placed in position to cover the crossing will be relieved, it is expected, in time to join you. It is desired that your troops and your trains, entire, in marching, should be concealed from the sight of the enemy, that they may not be aware of your movement. Your pack mules, small arm ammunition train, and two ambulances to a division to accompany you. Forage for animals for two days from to-day.

The greatest promptness in executing this movement and arriving at your destination is expected of you. As much of your corps as can cross on the bridge at United States ford to cross to-night, and all to cross by 7 A. M. to-morrow. General Couch precedes you, and the batteries left by General Meade also. After crossing, you will take up your line of march towards Chancellorsville. Keep your troops in as good condition as possible, while fully complying with your orders. Don't burden yourself with any transportation not absolutely needed. Every wagon is one too many in the way when they can be dispensed with. Send some one ahead to see your road clear, and use your pioneers when necessary.

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HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, COMMANDING LEFT WING, April 30, 1863.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to inform you that his headquarters will be at Chancellorsville to-night. It is proposed that the army now at that point will assume the initiative to-morrow morning, and will advance along the line of the plank road, uncovering what is called Bank's ford, where the bridges will be at once thrown across the river, which route will then become the shortest line of communication between the two wings of the army. Major-General Butterfield will remain at the present headquarters, and will at once transmit to the major-general commanding any communications you may desire to send him. It is not known, of course, what effect the advance will have upon the enemy, and the general commanding directs that you observe his movements with the utmost vigilance, and should he expose a weak point attack him in full force and destroy him. If he should show any symptoms of falling back, the general directs that you throw your whole force on the Bowling Green road, and pursue him with the utmost vigor, turning his fortified positions by the numerous by-roads which you can make use of for that purpose. If any portion of his organized forces should pass off to the east of the railroad you will, by detachments, pursue until you destroy or capture him. Simultaneous with the advance of your column on the Bowling Green road, if at all, a column will also advance on the telegraph road, and between you will sweep the country between the two highways and the railroad. You will be within easy communication, and both columns will spring to one another's assistance in case of encountering any considerable resistance, which can best be judged of by the magnitude of the fire. Keep your provisions and ammunition and forage replenished, leaving as much of your train to be brought afterwards as practicable. Trains will only embarrass and check your forward movement, and must not accompany you, unless it be the pack train. It may be expedient for you to join the right wing on the south bank of the river, and under cover of it to Fredericksburg. Be observant of your opportunities, and when you strike let it be done to destroy. When you move forward, if you want all your artillery, the batteries of the reserve here can be called for. The

enemy have at Hamilton's a pontoon train. The general expects that you will not permit them to cross the river. You will find an able commander in Major-General Reynolds.

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HOOKER'S CIRCULAR, May 1, 1863, TO CORPS COMMANDERS.

The Fifth corps, including three batteries, will be thrown on to the river road by the most direct route, the head of it advanced to near midway between Mott and Colin runs, the movement to be masked by small parties thrown out in advance, and to be completed at 2 o'clock.

The Twelfth corps, including its batteries, will be massed below the plank road, the head of it resting near the Tabernacle church, and masked from the view of the enemy by small advance parties, and the movement to be completed at 12 o'clock to enable the Eleventh corps to take its position.

One division of the Second corps, with one battery, will take a position at Todd's tavern, and will throw out strong detachments on the approaches in the direction of the enemy. The other division and batteries of the corps, will be massed, out of the road near Chancellorsville. These dispositions to be made at once.

The Third corps will be massed, as fast as it arrives, about one mile from Chancellorsville, on the United States ford road, excepting one brigade with a battery, which will take position at Dowdall's tavern.

General Pleasanton will hold his command, excepting those otherwise engaged, at Chancellorsville. After the movement commences headquarters will be at Tabernacle church.

The Eleventh Corps, with its batteries, will be massed on the plank road, about one mile in rear of the Twelfth. This movement to be completed at 2 o'clock.

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TELEGRAM OF HOOKER AT CHANCELLORSVILLE TO BUTTERFIELD,  
CHIEF OF STAFF AT FALMOUTH, May 2, 1863—1.55 A. M.

Direct for all the bridges to be taken up at Franklin's crossing and below before daylight, and for Reynold's corps to march at once, with pack train, to report at headquarters.

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CIRCULAR, DIRECTED TO SLOCUM AND HOWARD, May 2, 1863—  
9.30 A. M.

I am directed by the major-general commanding to say that the disposition you have made of your corps has been with a view to a front attack by the enemy. If he should throw himself upon your flank, he wishes you to examine the ground and determine upon the positions

you will take in that event, in order that you may be prepared for him in whatever direction he advances. He suggests that you have heavy reserves well in hand to meet the contingency. The right of your line does not appear strong enough. No artificial defences worth naming have been thrown up, and there appears to be a scarcity of troops at that point, and not, in the general's opinion, as favorably posted as might be. We have good reason to suppose that the enemy is moving to our right. Please advance your pickets, for purposes of observation, as far as may be safe, in order to obtain timely information of their approach.

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TELEGRAM FROM HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, SIXTH CORPS, dated 11.30 A. M., May 1, received 4.55 P. M.

Direct Major-General Sedgwick to threaten an attack in full force at 1 o'clock, and to continue in that attitude until further orders. Let the demonstration be as severe as can be, but not an attack.

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BUTTERFIELD TO SEDGWICK, May 1—11.20 o'clock.

General Hooker telegraphs you to throw your whole force on the Bowling Green road, and no other. My telegraph communication to the general is round about, and takes about three hours time.

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BUTTERFIELD TO SEDGWICK, May 2, 1863—9.55 A. M.

General Hooker telegraphs that you are 'all right; you have but Early's division in your front; balance all up here.

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HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, May 2, 1863—9 P. M.

The major-general commanding directs that you cross the Rappahannock, at Fredericksburg, on the receipt of this order, and at once take up your line of march on the Chancellorsville road until you connect with him, and will attack and destroy any force you may fall in with on the road. You will leave all your trains behind except pack trains of your ammunition, and march to be in the vicinity of the general at daylight. You will probably fall upon the rear of the forces commanded by General Lee, and between you and the major-general commanding, he expects to use him up. Send word to General Gibbon to take possession of Fredericksburg. Be sure not to fail.

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BUTTERFIELD TO SEDGWICK, May 1, 1863—10.25 A. M.

The following dispatch of a column of infantry and artillery wagons in motion towards our right just received, "A column of the enemy's

infantry, artillery, and wagons, extending whole length of ridge and south of Tyler's battery, head of column out of sight, moving from direction of railroad station towards our right. The force is apparently heavy. The stone wall under Marye's heights is apparently not occupied this morning. There is also reduction of force in railroad cut and trenches from the city to a mile south of it. The trench in rear of Henderson's is evacuated from the house and Hazel run."

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BUTTERFIELD TO HOOKER, May 1, 1863—11.32 A. M.

The column of enemy's troops has been seen passing Captain Hamilton's house by new road on the ridge through Temple's to the plank road near Barren's since the sun cleared up the fog. Not so many troops passing now as trains visible.

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BUTTERFIELD TO SEDGWICK, May 2, 1863—12.35 P. M.

Gibbon reports all quiet in his front. Few enemy to be seen. The hills back of Fredericksburg, near telegraph road, occupied. Small force in rifle-pits opposite Falmouth. This force increased last night. Probably anticipated a dash on our front.

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BUTTERFIELD TO SEDGWICK, May 2, 1863—12 midnight.

From the statements brought by General Hooker's aid, it seems to be of vital importance that you should fall upon Lee's rear with crushing force. He will explain all to you. Give your advance to one who will do all that the urgency of the case requires.

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BUTTERFIELD TO GIBBON, COMMANDING DIVISION OF THE SECOND CORPS AT FALMOUTH, May 2, 1863.

Your command must cross the river to Fredericksburg to-night. Pontoon bridge now at Lacy house. Get under way soon. General Sedgwick is ordered to move through Fredericksburg towards Chancellorsville. Look out you do not come in contact with him. You must see to the laying of the bridges.

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WARREN FOR HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, May 4, 1863.

I find everything snug here. We contracted the lines a little and repulsed the last assault with ease. General Hooker wishes them to attack him to-morrow if they will. He does not desire you to attack them again in force unless he attacks him at the same time. He says



you are too far away for him to direct. Look well to the safety of your corps, and keep up communication with General Benham, at Bank's ford and Fredericksburg. You can go to either place if you think it best to cross. Bank's ford would bring you in supporting distance of the main body, and would be better than falling back to Fredericksburg.

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HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, May 4, 1863—11 A. M.

The major-general commanding directs me to say that he does not wish you to cross the river at Bank's ford unless you are compelled to do so. The batteries at Bank's ford command the position. If it is practicable for you to maintain a position south side of Rappahannock, near Bank's ford, you will do so. It is very important that we retain position at Bank's ford; General Tyler commands the reserve artillery there.

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HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, May 4, 1863.

The commanding general directs that in the event you fall back, you reserve, if practicable, a position on the Fredericksburg side of the Rappahannock, which you can hold securely until to-morrow. Please let the commanding general have your opinion in regard to this by telegram from Bank's ford as soon as possible.

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SEDGWICK TO HOOKER, May 4, 1863—11.15 A. M.

The enemy threatens me strongly on two fronts. My position is bad for such attack. It was assumed for attack, and not for defence. It is not improbable that the bridges at Bank's ford may be sacrificed. Can you help me strongly if attacked?

As my bridges are two miles from me, I am compelled to cover them above or below from attack with the additional assistance of General Benham's brigade alone.

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SEDGWICK TO HOOKER, May 4, 1863—11.45 P. M.

My army is hemmed in upon the slope covered by the guns from the north side of Bank's ford. If I had only this army to care for I would withdraw it to-night. Do your operations require that I should jeopard by retaining it here? An immediate answer is indispensable. I may [unintelligible] to withdraw.

Received at 1 A. M. May 5, 1863.

Answered, Withdraw and cover. D. B.

SEDGWICK TO HOOKER, May 5, 1863.

I shall hold my position as ordered, on south side of Rappahannock,

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HOOKER TO SEDGWICK, May 5, 1863—1.20 P. M.

Yours received 1 A. M., saying you should hold position. Order to withdraw countermanded. Acknowledge both.

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SEDGWICK TO HOOKER, May 5, 1863—5 A. M.

The bridges at Bank's ford are swung and in process of being taken up. The troops are much exhausted. The dispatch countermanding my movement over the river was received after the troops had crossed.

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HOOKER TO PRESIDENT LINCOLN, May 6, 1863—3 P. M.

Have this moment returned to camp. On my way received your telegrams of 11 and 12.25 o'clock. The army had previously recrossed the river, and was on its return to camp. As it had none of its trains of supplies with it, I deemed this advisable. Above, I saw no way of giving the enemy a general battle with the prospect of success which I desire; not to exceed three corps of the troops on the right have been engaged; for the whole to join, there is a better place nearer at hand. Will write you at length to-night; am glad to hear that a portion of the cavalry has at length turned up. One portion did nothing.

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HOOKER TO PRESIDENT LINCOLN, May 7, 1863.

I have the honor to acknowledge your communication of this date, and, in answer, have to state that I do not deem it expedient to suspend operations on this line, from the reverse we have experienced in endeavoring to extricate the army from its present position. If in the first effort we failed, it was not from want of strength or conduct of the small number of troops actually engaged.

After its occurrence, the chances of success were so much lessened that I felt another plan might be adopted in place of that we were engaged in which would be more certain in its results; at all events a failure would not involve disaster, while in the other case, it was certain to follow the absence of success. I may add, that this consideration almost wholly determined me in ordering the army to return to its old camp. As to the best time for renewing our advance upon the enemy, I can only decide after an opportunity has been offered to learn the feeling of the troops. They should not be discouraged or depressed, for it is no fault of theirs, if I may except one corps, that our last efforts were not crowned with glorious victory. I suppose that details are not wanted of me at this time. I have decided in my own mind the plan

to be adopted in our next effort, if it should be your wish to have one made. It has this to recommend it, it will be one in which the operations of all the corps, unless it be a part of the cavalry, will be within my personal supervision.

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#### TESTIMONY OF GENERAL HOOKER BEFORE COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

I said that Chancellorsville had been called a disaster. I lost under the operations, one piece of artillery, I think five or six wagons, and one ambulance. Of course, many of the Eleventh corps lost their arms and knapsacks. In my opinion there is nothing to regret in regard to Chancellorsville except the failure to accomplish all that I moved to accomplish. The troops lost no honor, except in one corps, and we lost no more men than the enemy; but expectation was high, the army in splendid condition, and great results were expected from it. It was at a time, too, when the nation required a victory.

*Question.* What corps had you in the action of the 3d of May?

*Answer.* The Twelfth and part of the Second, the Third and a small part of the Fifth. The Eleventh corps I put on the left, where it was not exposed. The Eleventh and First corps were not engaged at all, as was also the case with, perhaps, two-thirds of the Fifth corps.

*Question.* Why were not those corps brought into action?

*Answer.* They could not be put into position. When the corps commanders assembled on the night of the 4th and 5th, I submitted to them the mode of attack I should have to adopt in case of an advance; that it could only be with slender columns if an advance was made at all. On the roads we would have to make use of for that purpose the enemy was particularly strong, and was pressing his defences throughout the line. Early in the campaign I had come to the conclusion that, with the arms now in use, it would be impossible to carry works by an assault in front, provided they were properly constructed and properly manned. I was of that impression at the battle of Fredericksburg, and requested General Burnside not to insist upon an attack being made under those circumstances; I said to him that I would advise him not to attack then. He said it was necessary, and of course I made it, and it was made with great vigor, with all the force that men ever carried into action with them. I concentrated my artillery fire upon the point where I was to make my attack, and kept it up till sundown, making the attack at the very last possible moment, but the nearest I could get my men to their works was perhaps fifteen paces, and there the heads of the column would vanish. They could destroy men faster than I could throw them on their works; it was the cotton bags of New Orleans over again.

Again, in the west, I was ordered to make an attack at New Hope church, and lost nearly 2,000 men, while the enemy's loss did not probably exceed 50. Sherman had divided his army into two parts at Etowah, and we were to concentrate at Dallas. Dallas was three miles

from us, but one only for the enemy at Alatoona. Johnson threw his army between the two columns to prevent a junction ; and, in order to bring it about, I fought from Pumpkinvine creek, driving the enemy before me, until I reached New Hope church, a distance of four miles, where I found the enemy in position and intrenched, where I attacked him, but with the same results that I had experienced at Fredericksburg. The most that I could do was to establish my corps on a line about eighty paces distant from that of the enemy ; and it was on that the army developed itself, taking a week to accomplish it. I do not know an instance in this war where rifle-pits, properly constructed and properly manned, have been taken by front assaults alone, either on our side or that of the enemy.



## ORGANIZATION OF GENERAL LEE'S ARMY.

### SECOND CORPS, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL THOS. J. JACKSON.

COMMAND.	BRIGADE.	DIVISION.
Fifth Louisiana.....	Hays'	Early's.
Sixth Louisiana.....	Hays'	Early'a.
Seventh Louisiana.....	Hays'	Early'a.
Eighth Louisiana.....	Hays'	Early'a.
Ninth Louisiana.....	Hays'	Early's.
Thirteenth Georgia.....	Hays'	Early'a.
Thirteenth Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early's.
Twenty-sixth Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early's.
Thirty-first Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early'a.
Thirty-eighth Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early's.
Sixtieth Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early's.
Sixty-first Georgia.....	Gordon's.	Early'a.
Sixth North Carolina.....	Hoke's.	Early'a.
Twenty-first North Carolina.....	Hoke's.	Early's.
Twenty-fourth North Carolina.....	Hoke's.	Early'a.
Fifty-seventh North Carolina.....	Hoke's.	Early's.
First North Carolina Battalion.....	Hoke's.	Early's.
Thirteenth Virginia.....	Smith's.	Early's.
Forty-ninth Virginia.....	Smith's.	Early's.
Fifty-second Virginia.....	Smith's.	Early's.
Fifty-eighth Virginia.....	Smith's.	Early's.
Forty-seventh Virginia.....	H. Heth's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fifty-fifth Virginia.....	H. Heth's.	A. P. Hill's.
Twenty-second Virginia Battalion.....	H. Heth's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fortieth Virginia.....	H. Heth's.	A. P. Hill's.
First South Carolina.....	McGowan's.	A. P. Hill's.
Orr's Rifles.....	McGowan's.	A. P. Hill's.
Twelfth South Carolina.....	McGowan's.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirteenth South Carolina.....	McGowan's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fourteenth South Carolina.....	McGowan's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fourteenth Georgia.....	Thomas'.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirty-fifth Georgia.....	Thomas'.	A. P. Hill's.
Forty-fifth Georgia.....	Thomas'.	A. P. Hill's.
Forty-ninth Georgia.....	Thomas'.	A. P. Hill's.
Seventeenth North Carolina.....	Lane's.	A. P. Hill's.
Eighteenth North Carolina.....	Lane's.	A. P. Hill's.
Twenty-eighth North Carolina.....	Lane's.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirty-third North Carolina.....	Lane's.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirty-seventh North Carolina.....	Lane's.	A. P. Hill's.
First Tennessee.....	Archer's.	A. P. Hill's.
Seventh Tennessee.....	Archer's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fourteenth Tennessee.....	Archer's.	A. P. Hill's.
Fifth Alabama Battalion.....	Archer's.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirteenth Alabama.....	Archer's.	A. P. Hill's.
Thirteenth North Carolina.....	Pender's.	A. P. Hill's.

COMMAND.	BRIGADE.	DIVISION.
Sixteenth North Carolina.....	Pender's.....	A. P. Hill's.
Twenty-second North Carolina.....	Pender's.....	A. P. Hill's.
Thirty-fourth North Carolina.....	Pender's.....	A. P. Hill's.
Thirty-eighth North Carolina.....	Pender's.....	A. P. Hill's.
Tenth Virginia.....	Colston's.....	Trimble's.
Twenty-third Virginia.....	Colston's.....	Trimble's.
Thirty-seventh Virginia.....	Colston's.....	Trimble's.
First North Carolina.....	Colston's.....	Trimble's.
Third North Carolina.....	Colston's.....	Trimble's.
Second Virginia.....	E. F. Paxton's.....	Trimble's.
Fourth Virginia.....	E. F. Paxton's.....	Trimble's.
Fifth Virginia.....	E. F. Paxton's.....	Trimble's.
Twenty-seventh Virginia.....	E. F. Paxton's.....	Trimble's.
Thirty-third Virginia.....	E. F. Paxton's.....	Trimble's.
First Louisiana.....	F. T. Nichols'.....	Trimble's.
Second Louisiana.....	F. T. Nichols'.....	Trimble's.
Tenth Louisiana.....	F. T. Nichols'.....	Trimble's.
Fourteenth Louisiana.....	F. T. Nichols'.....	Trimble's.
Twenty-first Virginia.....	Jones'.....	Trimble's.
Forty-second Virginia.....	Jones'.....	Trimble's.
Forty-fourth Virginia.....	Jones'.....	Trimble's.
Forty-eighth Virginia.....	Jones'.....	Trimble's.
Fiftieth Virginia.....	Jones'.....	Trimble's.
Twelfth Alabama.....	Rodes'.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-sixth Alabama.....	Rodes'.....	D. H. Hill's.
Fifth Alabama.....	Rodes'.....	D. H. Hill's.
Sixth Alabama.....	Rodes'.....	D. H. Hill's.
Third Alabama.....	Rodes'.....	D. H. Hill's.
Sixth Georgia.....	Colquitt's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-third Georgia.....	Colquitt's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-seventh Georgia.....	Colquitt's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-eighth Georgia.....	Colquitt's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Nineteenth Georgia.....	Colquitt's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Fourth Georgia.....	Dole's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twelfth Georgia.....	Dole's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-first Georgia.....	Dole's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Forty-fourth Georgia.....	Dole's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Thirtieth North Carolina.....	Ramseur's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Fourth North Carolina.....	Ramseur's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Fourteenth North Carolina.....	Ramseur's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Second North Carolina.....	Ramseur's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Fifth North Carolina.....	Iverson's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twelfth North Carolina.....	Iverson's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twentieth North Carolina.....	Iverson's.....	D. H. Hill's.
Twenty-third North Carolina.....	Iverson's.....	D. H. Hill's.

#### FIRST CORPS, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL JAMES LONGSTREET.

Twelfth Virginia.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Sixteenth Virginia.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Forty-first Virginia.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Sixty-first Virginia.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Sixth Virginia.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Grandy's battery.....	Mahone's.....	Anderson's.
Eighth Florida.....	Perry's.....	Anderson's.
Second Florida.....	Perry's.....	Anderson's.
Fifth Florida.....	Perry's.....	Anderson's.
Eighth Alabama.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.
Ninth Alabama.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.
Tenth Alabama.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.
Eleventh Alabama.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.
Fourteenth Alabama.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.

COMMAND.	BRIGADE.	DIVISION.
Lewis' Battery.....	Wilcox's.....	Anderson's.
Sixteenth Mississippi.....	Posey's.....	Anderson's.
Twelfth Mississippi.....	Posey's.....	Anderson's.
Nineteenth Mississippi.....	Posey's.....	Anderson's.
Forty-eighth Mississippi.....	Posey's.....	Anderson's.
Second Georgia Battalion.....	Wright's.....	Anderson's.
Twenty-second Georgia.....	Wright's.....	Anderson's.
Third Georgia.....	Wright's.....	Anderson's.
Forty-eighth Georgia.....	Wright's.....	Anderson's.
Eighteenth Georgia.....	Wofford's.....	McLaws'.
Twenty-fourth Georgia.....	Wofford's.....	McLaws'.
Sixteenth Georgia.....	Wofford's.....	McLaws'.
Cobbs' Legion.....	Wofford's.....	McLaws'.
Phillips' Legion.....	Wofford's.....	McLaws'.
Fifteenth South Carolina.....	Kershaw's.....	McLaws'.
Seventh South Carolina.....	Kershaw's.....	McLaws'.
Second South Carolina.....	Kershaw's.....	McLaws'.
James' Battalion.....	Kershaw's.....	McLaws'.
Third South Carolina.....	Kershaw's.....	McLaws'.
Thirteenth Mississippi.....	Barksdale's.....	McLaws'.
Seventeenth Mississippi.....	Barksdale's.....	McLaws'.
Eighteenth Mississippi.....	Barksdale's.....	McLaws'.
Twenty-first Georgia.....	Semmes'.....	McLaws'.
Tenth Georgia.....	Semmes'.....	McLaws'.
Fifty-third Georgia.....	Semmes'.....	McLaws'.
Fifteenth Georgia.....	Semmes'.....	McLaws'.

## CAVALRY.

First Virginia Cavalry.....	Fitz-Hugh Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Second Virginia Cavalry.....	Fitz-Hugh Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Third Virginia Cavalry.....	Fitz-Hugh Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Fourth Virginia Cavalry.....	Fitz-Hugh Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Fifth Virginia Cavalry.....	Fitz-Hugh Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Thirteenth Virginia Cavalry.....	W. H. F. Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Seventh Virginia Cavalry.....	W. H. F. Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Fifteenth Virginia Cavalry.....	W. H. F. Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Ninth Virginia Cavalry.....	W. H. F. Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.
Second North Carolina.....	W. H. F. Lee's.....	J. E. B. Stuart's.

## ARTILLERY.

Page's Battery.....	Carter's Battalion.
Fry's Battery.....	Carter's Battalion.
Carter's Battery.....	Carter's Battalion.
Jeff. Davis Battery.....	Carter's Battalion.
Carrington's Battery.....	Jones' Battalion.
Garber's Battery.....	Jones' Battalion.
Thompson's Battery.....	Jones' Battalion.
Fauver's Battery.....	Jones' Battalion.
Marye's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
Latham's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
Bronson's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
McGraw's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
Crenshaw's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
Davidson's Battery.....	Walker's Battalion.
Rice's Battery.....	McIntosh's Battalion.
Lusk's Battery.....	McIntosh's Battalion.
Hart's Battery.....	McIntosh's Battalion.
Johnson's Battery.....	McIntosh's Battalion.
Smith's Battery.....	Brown's Battalion.
Watson's Battery.....	Brown's Battalion.

Dauce's Battery.....	Brown's Battalion.
Huff's Battery.....	Brown's Battalion.
Brooke's Battery.....	Brown's Battalion.
Jordan's Battery.....	Alexander's Battalion.
Rhett's Battery.....	Alexander's Battalion.
Moody's Battery.....	Alexander's Battalion.
Parker's Battery.....	Alexander's Battalion.
Eubank's Battery.....	Alexander's Battalion.
Lewis' Battery.....	Garnett's Battalion.
Grundy's Battery.....	Garnett's Battalion.
Moore's Battery.....	Garnett's Battalion.
Maurice's Battery.....	Garnett's Battalion.
McCarthy's Battery.....	Cabell's Battalion.
Manly's Battery.....	Cabell's Battalion.
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